

*Part 1:*

# **Clinton Central School District Long Range Strategic Plan**

*Vision 2020*

**Clinton Central School District  
Board of Education**

*May, 2014*

*Developed with Assistance from Dr. Kevin S. Baughman & Associates*

# Clinton Central School District

Clinton, New York

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# Clinton Central School District Comprehensive Strategic Plan

*Vision 2020*

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## Overview of Process

The Clinton Central School District underwent an external strategic analysis from December, 2013 through March, 2014. The intent was to identify district strengths, and areas for improvement regarding staff, process, and outcomes. The district contracted with an outside consultant, Dr. Kevin Baughman & Associates, to conduct the analysis and utilizing the results, develop a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the district. The multi-year strategic plan covers the period from 2014-2020 and is called Vision 2020. Data was collected and analyzed from:

- school district documents
- New York State student performance results
- objective independent observations
- classroom walk-through observations
- over 55 small group interviews and focus groups
- a community forum
- on-line surveys (*instructional staff, students, parents, and community members*)
- leadership and Board of Education workshops
- review of APPR narratives
- review of Rubicon Atlas mapping software

Throughout this review, strengths of this district were described by all participants. Parents appreciate that schools are responsive to them and calls are immediately returned. Community, parents, and staff all share the *people care* and there is a *passion for serving*. Community and district staff appreciate the benefits of living and working in a smaller community and believe that Clinton remains a tight and close community. The Clinton “brand” is the focus on the individual student.

Through the review and analysis of data, patterns, gaps and early recommendations were generated by the external consultant review team. Known as the PA-GER list (Patterns, Gaps, and Early Recommendations), these recommendations and early observations required validation. Validation occurred through discussions with the leadership team, the Board of Education, and four external surveys of parents, teachers, community and students.

## Purpose of this Document

This document is the **Comprehensive Strategic Plan**. The thorough review process produced a large quantity of validated recommendations, as well as observations and findings. Many other suggestions/concerns shared with the consultants were not corroborated or validated, or did not rise to a level of reasonable significance for inclusion. The Comprehensive Strategic Plan must be manageable and focus on the most critical recommendations that will produce the greatest impact and address the most pressing needs of the district. Therefore, not all items identified during the review are included in the Comprehensive Strategic Plan. The action items were therefore divided into two distinct sections: Part 1: *Comprehensive Strategic Plan*; and Part 2: *Companion to the Strategic Plan*.

The Comprehensive Strategic Plan includes validated recommendations that are significantly more detailed, multi-step, often requiring multiple years for implementation, typically systemic, and provide the highest potential for leveraged actions and positive impact. These recommendations should be seen as imperatives and highest priorities. For each item, detailed information is provided regarding responsibility, timeline, action steps, resources, and suggested evaluation.

Part Two of the strategic plan documentation contains analysis, findings, observations and actionable items. Although this information is important, it does not rise to the level of significance to be included in the Comprehensive Strategic Plan. Information contained in the companion document may provide insight or analysis and may suggest future action, or actionable items. Any actionable item in this companion document is typically a single step, can be addressed at any future time, and have more limited system-wide impact.

Other services and products provided to the district are included in Part 2: Companion to the Comprehensive Strategic Plan. They include: development of a long range financial planning process and selection of a group of New York State school district “statistical neighbors”. The “neighbors” were used to compare financial and student achievement performance. Other services include development of a long range student enrollment projection and review of the school’s Mission/Vision statement with the Board of Education and Superintendent for possible future revision to better match community and school district core values and expectations.

The topics within each category of the Plan included 7 topic areas as follows:

1. Board of Education
2. Building Leadership
3. Communication
4. District Leadership
5. Facilities/Grounds
6. Financial Management and Planning
7. Instruction/Pedagogy

**Prioritization of Actions in Comprehensive Strategic Plan**

The prioritization of the action plans comprising the Clinton Comprehensive Strategic Plan is made difficult because the recommended actions are all important and represent positive leveraged actions. However, no school district regardless of staff or resources, can address or accomplish the entire plan in a short window of time. The District Strategic Planning Team or other decision making body will need to continuously shift and re-prioritize the plan as needs and challenges change. To initiate the action plans, priorities are divided into two levels: 1) Imperatives; and 2) High Priorities. For both categories there is an on-going, or maintenance of effort continuation. Where there is no color or pattern in a cell, no action is recommended or needed.

The Key to the Action Planning Map is as follows:

1 - Imperative =	1	Imperative On-Going =	1a	2 - High Priority =	2	High Priority On-Going =	2a
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*Imperative* items should be given the most attention and commitment of resources, followed by the items rates as *high priority*.

**A Comprehensive Strategic Plan is a Flexible Living Document**

The development, planning and implementation of a Comprehensive Strategic Plan is as much about process as an end product. The document should be regularly evolving and changing as actions are completed and new priorities identified. This Plan establishes teams and committees of school district stakeholders and processes for making important long term decisions. It should be regularly reviewed and modified. This stewardship of the Strategic vision requires a school and community culture committed to continuous growth and improvement. This commitment separates the good districts from those viewed as outstanding.

# Clinton Central School District Comprehensive Strategic Plan *Vision 2020*

## Action Planning Map

### Key to Action Plan Time Line Priorities

1 - Imperative = **1**

Imperative On-Going = 1a

2 - High Priority = **2**

High Priority On-Going = 2a

Category	<i>Strategic Plan - Action Sequence Map</i>	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Board of Education	A. A Clear Vision for the District is Needed.	1					
Board of Education	B. The Strategic Plan Requires an Implementation Team.	1	1a	1a	1a	1a	1a
Board of Education	C. Advocate for Encouraging Commercial, Residential and Light Industrial Development within the School District.	2	2	2a	2a	2a	2a
Building Leadership	D. Strengthening and Supporting a Leadership Team is Needed.		2	2a			
Communication	E. On-Going Substantive Parent & Community Engagement is Needed.	1	1a	1a	1a	1a	1a
Communication	F. The Board of Education and Administration Need Training/Awareness in How to Engage and Deal with the Media to Foster Public Relations.		1		1a		
Communication	G. The District Website Needs to be More Inviting and Frequently Updated and Serve as a Major Voice to the Public.		2	2a	2a	2a	2a
Communication	H. A District Electronic Newsletter Regularly E-mailed to Residents Would Significantly Improve District Information and Engagement.	2	2a	2a	2a	2a	2a
Communication	I. The District Needs to Increase Communication with Parents through a Parent Portal or other Technologies.			2	2a	2a	2a
Communication	J. There is a need to Genuinely Celebrate and Recognize Staff Members Who Extend Themselves Beyond the Expected.	1	1a	1a	1a	1a	1a
Communication	K. There is No Process to Preserve the Rich History of the School District.			2	2a	2a	2a
Communication	L. Need for Effective Definition of Clinton School District "Brand"- Small Community Which Cares About its Children.		1		1a		1a
District Leadership	M. Systematic Periodic Enrollment Projections Should Be Developed.	1		1		1	
Facilities & Grounds	N. A Maintenance Plan for Critical Operating Equipment Needs to be Developed.			2	2a	2a	2a

## Clinton Central School District Comprehensive Strategic Plan *Vision 2020* Action Planning Map

### Key to Action Plan Time Line Priorities

1 - Imperative = 1

Imperative On-Going = 1a

2 - High Priority = 2

High Priority On-Going = 2a

Category	<i>Strategic Plan - Action Sequence Map</i>	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Facilities & Grounds	O. Process for Work Orders needs to be Consistently Followed.	2		2a		2a	
Fin. Mgmt. & Planning	P. Clearly Defined Process for Budget Reduction Decisions.	1	1a				
Fin. Mgmt. & Planning	Q. Technology Planning, Application in Classrooms & Better Support is Needed.		2	2a		2a	
Fin. Mgmt. & Planning	R. Health Insurance Costs are Very High Compared to Similar School Districts.	1	1a				
Instruction & Pedagogy	S. Academic Intervention Services (AIS) Delivery Review is Needed.	1	1a				
Instruction & Pedagogy	T. Response to Intervention (RtI) and Teacher Support Team Processes Need Review.		1	1a	1a		
Instruction & Pedagogy	U. A Professional Learning Community Model to Enhance Effectively Using Student Data.		2	2a	2a	2a	2a
Instruction & Pedagogy	V. With Common Core Implementation, Discussion is Needed Regarding Writing, Modification to the Modules, and Consistency Across Grade Levels.	1	1a	1a	1a	1a	1a
Instruction & Pedagogy	W. K-12 Curriculum Audit & Vision is Needed.			1	1	1	1
Instruction & Pedagogy	X. A District Technology Use Policy Will Provide Guidance and Guide Appropriate Use of District Resources.	2	2a				
Instruction & Pedagogy	Y. Instructional Strategies that Richly Engage All Students.	1	1	1	1a	1a	1a
Instruction & Pedagogy	Z. Data Dashboard and Data Driven Decision Making.			1	1a	1a	1a

# Clinton Central School District

## Comprehensive Strategic Plan – *Vision 2020*

*The actions included in the Comprehensive Strategic Plan require detailed review and planning, are multi-step, are typically influencing the entire system, and provide high potential for leveraged action. These are seen as imperatives that the district will commit time and resources to address.*

### A. A Clear Vision for the District is Needed. (Board of Education)

#### Background

Instructional and non-instructional staff need to understand where the district is headed, particularly when multiple years of reductions have been experienced by everyone. Including staff in the work of crafting and implementing a multi-year action plan is critical. Additionally, this could build the strong team spirit that is needed to do the heavy lifting over the next few years. The existing **District Mission Statement** was taken from previous NYSSBA literature and modified. It is lengthy, and lacks clarity or a clear purpose. A vision/mission statement should be brief, easy to remember, provide purpose and a future, and help guide district and leadership decisions. The Board of Education has been provided with several optional phrases, and samples based upon the Board's identified core values during an earlier meeting in February, 2014. The priorities of the school district are not clear to the community. The district needs to decide what it values, how to communicate these values in its daily work, and how to work within the existing economic environment to maximize benefits for children and the community.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>A.</b> A new revised District Mission/Vision statement should be completed as one of the first actions in implementing the Strategic Plan.	
Responsibility	Board of Education and Policy Committee
Priority	1 (2014-15)
Comments	Board should complete this activity by Fall, 2014
Basic Steps	1) Identify core values of district and community 2) Study samples of district mission and vision statements 3) Develop proposed mission/vision statement 4) Share and invite feedback from school and community 5) Modify as needed, approve
Monitor/Evaluation	Completion when approved as district policy

### B. The Strategic Plan Requires an Implementation Team. (Board of Education)

#### Background

Many decisions will need to be made about implementing an approved Clinton Comprehensive Strategic Plan. The decisions will include which actions to take, who will implement them, when will it be implemented, how will the action(s) be monitored and evaluated, how will the action and results be communicated to others, and who will decide on modifying or changing the actions based upon changing variables. The Board of Education should create a **District Strategic Planning Team** and empower that

team to address the issues and challenges listed immediately above regarding successfully implementing the Plan. The team should consist of members of the Board of Education (3); Superintendent; Principals (2); Business Official (1); Administrators (2); Teachers (1 from each level plus one at-large – selected by the Association); parents (3); community (2); support staff (2); and retirees (1). This is a total of 19-20 – there is much “heavy lifting” to do and this group will be advisory to the Board of Education and Superintendent. *The work of this group and the progress on the Plan should be regularly communicated and shared with all district stakeholders.*

ACTION PLAN	
<b>B.</b> The Board of Education should create a <b>District Strategic Planning Team</b> and empower that team to successfully implementing the Plan.	
Responsibility	Board of Education
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1a On-going (2015-2020)
Comments	Board should create upon Plan approval. Team will function throughout Plan life.
Basic Steps	1) Identify the composition of the team by the Board of Education. 2) Seek volunteers, request members through Clinton Teachers Association and other organizations. 3) District Strategic Planning Team will meet at least monthly (more frequently initially) and have a regular short report at the Board meeting as needed. Subcommittees may meet more frequently. 4) District Strategic Planning Team will review both the contents of the Plan and the Observations & Findings document. 5) Team will develop the detail of Plan. 6) Team will regularly communicate progress with all constituents and media. 7) Team should be co-chaired (co-chairs would benefit from facilitation training).
Monitor/Evaluation	Actions include: creation of team by Board of Education through developed policy or motion, selection of team, and scheduling of first meeting.

**C. Advocate for Encouraging Commercial, Residential and Light Industrial Development within the School District. (Board of Education & Superintendent)**

Background

The combination of the tax cap, a lack of any growth in the tax base, and increasing school district costs have forced the district to reduce and eliminate key academic and extra-curricular programs as well as reduce staff. Without an increase in the tax base, the Clinton School District educational plan is not sustainable over the long term. The school administration and board need to work more closely with the **town and county legislators** and others to work on developing and encouraging development of taxable property in the school district.

- a. **Create an Ad-Hoc group:** comprised of board members from the school district and town, the Oneida County IDA, the County Executive, county legislators, realtors, and business owners, the group will develop strategies to encourage light industry and appropriate development within the school district to increase the tax base, control rising property taxes, and maintain and preserve programming for children.

- b. **Water sewer connections:** the capacity in the town and village is limited which impacts opportunities for industrial and light industrial growth which could provide additional tax revenues.
- c. **Property Valuation:** while needing to remain neutral, the town needs a reassessment of property valuation as the current equalization rate (around 60%) creates many inequities and unfairness in the current evaluation system in the community.
- d. **Community partnerships:** parents believe that for the current educational program to continue, there is a real need for partnerships. *Parents* value the small community feel but want it balanced against the opportunities available in other, larger districts. The *community* is interested in forging stronger partnerships with the business community and suggests that the district seat district members on various community governing bodies.

ACTION PLAN	
C. Work more closely with the <b>town and county legislators</b> and others to work on developing and encouraging development of taxable property in the school district.	
Responsibility	Board of Education and Administration
Priority	2 (2014-15); 2a On-going (2015-2020)
Comment	Action is essential for sustainability of current programs and services over time.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Create an ad hoc group comprised of board members from the school district and town, the Oneida County IDA, the County Executive, county legislators, realtors, and business owners. The group will develop strategies to encourage light industry and appropriate development within the school district to increase the tax base, control rising property taxes, and maintain and preserve programming for children.</li> <li>2) The ad hoc group will also look for county, regional and state development funds.</li> <li>3) The ad hoc group representatives will regularly communicate progress with all constituents and media.</li> <li>4) The Board of Education should investigate the question of adequate water and sewer services with the Town of Kirkland and the extent of any impact on discouraging light industry or residential development to locate within the Town.</li> <li>5) The Board of Education and Administration should look to be more inclusive of businesses and business owners serving on school committees and advisory groups.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Creation of ad hoc team, establishing a series of meeting dates, and the establishment and recognition of steps that need to be taken to address this issue by the ad hoc group.

**D. Strengthening and Supporting a Leadership Team is Needed. (Building Leadership)**

Background

Over the past three years the Clinton district has lost administrators with significant educational administration experience and knowledge. The district leadership is performing reasonably well considering the lack of prior experience and support provided. The majority of the leadership team remains with limited experience and will require continued support as each builds on their individual talents to lead the Clinton district. There is a need for advanced transition planning including a study of the administrative needs to best serve the community. A formal mentoring program or a senior school leader assigned to each current leader would be helpful. There also needs to be some professional training funds allocated for participation in principal academies, training, workshops, etc. The current school administration should also be involved in identifying needs and opportunities for growth and development.

ACTION PLAN	
D. The Leadership Team would benefit from additional support including an assigned mentor colleague, and additional funds for training.	
Responsibility	The Board of Administration and Superintendent of Schools
Priority	2 (2015-16); 2a On-going (2016-17)
Comment	A focus on developing leaders will be spurred with new Superintendent.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Work with the BOCES District Superintendent to assign a very experienced area school administrator colleague to the school leadership team having less than 5 years in the district.</li> <li>2) A transition plan for the elementary school principal should be considered over the next two years.</li> <li>3) Funds should be budgeted for the principals and other administrators for memberships to national and state leadership associations.</li> <li>4) Funds should be budgeted for targeted professional development activities and workshops.</li> <li>5) The leadership team should have input into the memberships and staff development opportunities selected.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	All items upon completion. Self-evident.

**E. On-Going Substantive Parent & Community Engagement is Needed. (Communication)**

Background

Both the BOE and administrative team need to develop opportunities for engaging residents and professionals in substantive discussion on the academic program instead of allowing budgetary issues (predominantly reductions) to dominate the discourse. There is a need to communicate more frequently with the community about the future of the district that changes the focus from “pleading” during budget to “discussing” other substantive issues. The district should establish and schedule periodic forums on a variety of topics which lead to enhanced opportunities for engagement on topical issues that are important to this school district and community.

- a. **Senior Citizens/Community:** The district should consider engaging seniors/community not only at budget time and for music concerts but also for updates on programming, celebrations and “good news” of the district. Establishing a series of annual Senior or Community Seminars on topics including: 1) The new teacher evaluation system; 2) The Common Core Curriculum and Implementation; 3) Academic Comparisons with Other Districts; 4) A Night with Clinton Graduates Currently in College; etc.
- b. **A Communication Team** should be appointed to study creative outreach. This could be a combination of board members, and other stakeholders.
- c. **Common Core:** Parents continue to request further clarification of Common Core. An effective strategy is to show the evolution of student work post-Common Core to make visible what students are now able to do. Teacher leaders are pleased to highlight their practices at a parent/community night.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>E.</b> There is a need to communicate more frequently with the community about the future of the district that changes the focus from “pleading” during budget to “discussing” other substantive issues.	
Responsibility	Board of Education, Superintendent, Administration & Teaching Staff
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1a On-going (2015-2020)
Comment	The engagement should become part of the culture and expectation of the district.
Basic Steps	1) Create a team or group responsible for engaging public with Superintendent ultimately responsible. 2) May utilize the BOCES Communications Specialists (cross contract) as a shared service to reduce local costs and generate state aid in subsequent year. 3) Determine several educational topics of high interest to the public and senior citizens. Consider how you title these events to provoke interest. 4) Schedule several periodic public forums on non-financial programs like Common Core. 5) Advertise, notify and encourage attendance. 6) Place on web site and tape for playback from web site. 7) Obtain testimonials indicating how much someone enjoyed the program. Place testimonials on the web site and use in future marketing of forums.
Monitor/Evaluation	Develop and deliver 2-4 public educational forums annually.

**F. The Board of Education and Administration Need Training/Awareness in How to Engage and Deal with the Media to Foster Public Relations. (Communication)**

Background

Parents, teachers, and community alike, all note the deficiencies in the area of public relations over the last ten years. Positive messages about the school district are not being shared – or at least not being paid attention to by the public. The “good news” of the district is only being provided to parents and this is somewhat limited and inconsistent. The Board of Education and school district need to emphasize the many positive achievements of students and staff, and spend more time celebrating the positive things in the district. More engagement with the community and the media will help build the academic reputation of the district. The long term lack of attention to sharing good news has caused the image of the school district to slightly decline in the eyes of some community citizens and has even impacted upon some staff.

Training is also needed for the Board of Education, Superintendent and administration on how to engage and interact with the media. The district needs to establish protocols on dealing with communication to the public in terms of who reports information, who responds, and crafting the message for the intended audience.

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	
<b>F. Training is needed for the board, superintendent and administration on how to engage and interact with the media.</b>	
Responsibility	Superintendent to facilitate planning and process
Priority	1 (2015-16); 1a On-going (2017-18)
Comment	Initial training plus a follow-up two years later.
Basic Steps	1) Training or facilitator selected. 2) Training of Board of Education and administration. 3) Establish protocols on who speaks, under what conditions, etc. 4) Superintendent could develop Administrative Regulation or Board of education could draft a policy.
Monitor/Evaluation	When training is completed and a Regulation or Policy has been drafted and approved.

### **G. The District Website Needs to be More Inviting and Frequently Updated and Serve as a Major Voice to the Public. (Communication)**

#### Background

The website needs to be more inviting, timely, and topical. It currently lacks email addresses, phone numbers, directions and other information. Since this is currently the predominant means of communication, its full capacity and utility should be used. Included in this work would be the realization that communication is critical to a renewed partnership and relationship with the community; that the frequent maintenance of websites serves to continue to foster goodwill while providing critical district and classroom information. The realtors could assist with input regarding the design and content of the web site regarding "Moving to the Area?". The district needs to commit staff to maintain, update and enrich this important communication tool. The BOCES Communications service could also assist in this work.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>G. The website needs to be more inviting, timely, and topical.</b>	
Responsibility	Superintendent or directed staff member - webmaster.
Priority	2 (2015-16); 2a On-going (2016-2020)
Comment	A more functional web site holds the key to re-branding the Clinton image.
Basic Steps	1) Designate a webmaster – provide training and financial support. 2) Consider utilizing the BOCES for web re-design. 3) Review other school web sites to compare and contrast. 4) Add daily content, add videos, add downloadable information 5) Ensure that staff and administrators are sharing information for the web site. 6) Add Mission Statement/Vision Statement 7) Add features on students 8) Add pictures of the Board, Administrative, etc. 9) Add “Moving to the Area?”
Monitor/Evaluation	On-going update and improvements. After the webmaster has been designated and resources and time committed.

**H. A District Electronic Newsletter Regularly E-mailed to Residents Would Significantly Improve District Information and Engagement. (Communication)**

Background

A district on-line electronic newsletter provides a less expensive, quick, and very timely communication opportunity. The rising costs of printing, paper and mailing render the traditional paper mailed newsletter costly and dated. (The printed budget newsletter is legally required to be sent by regular mail.) The strong majority of residents and parents now have internet access. These district newsletters could be 2-4 pages, and be sent monthly. They would include building and district news and announcements. Some buildings already send an electronic newsletter for the individual school but not all schools send them. These building newsletters are not always regularly e-mailed, and they only are distributed to parents. The electronic newsletter should assume the primary responsibility of sharing news about all the buildings and programs. The newsletter should not just focus on district oriented news otherwise it would not be fully supported by each building.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>H.</b> A district on-line electronic newsletter provides a less expensive, quick, and very timely communication opportunity.	
Responsibility	The Communications Specialist, webmaster, or others could be responsible. The Superintendent should hold ultimate responsibility for staffing and resource commitment with support from the Board of Education.
Priority	2 (2014-15); 2a On-going (2015-2020)
Comment	An electronic newsletter can be provided more regularly at less cost, and available to everyone.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Dedicate staff and resources.</li> <li>2) Initially start out possibly bi-monthly before moving to monthly.</li> <li>3) Obtain as many e-mail addresses as possible – ask on any budget vote dates.</li> <li>4) Begin developing an e-mail master list starting with parents.</li> <li>5) Develop articles and publish – and e-mail.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Observe once the e-Newsletter has begun to be published bi-monthly. Observe the collection of e-mail addresses.

#### **I. The District Needs to Increase Communication with Parents through a Parent Portal or other Technologies. (Communication)**

##### Background

Communication emerged as a theme throughout data collection. Parents requested a **parent portal** to more effectively observe their child's academic progress. Additionally, there is a need for effective use of current and relevant updated **classroom websites**.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>I.</b> Enhanced Communication with Parents Using Technology	
Responsibility	Administration, Staff and Board of Education, Teachers, Technology Planning Team or Communications Team (if created)
Priority	2 (2016-17); 2a On-going (2017-2020)
Comment	Will require a thorough review of decision, transfer of data, training, and culture change.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The advantages and costs for implementation of the Parent Portal need to be examined.</li> <li>2) Regular use of either web sites or parent portal studied as it related to feedback on the parent survey.</li> <li>3) Discuss benefits of regular communication with parent community as it relates to knowledge of instruction, content of courses, curriculum, support of budgets.</li> <li>4) Training of staff and on-going data updating required.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Either creation of Parent Portal or regular updating of the teacher web pages or both.

**J. There is a need to Genuinely Celebrate and Recognize Staff Members Who Extend Themselves Beyond the Expected. (Communication)**

Background

The staff have faced several difficult years of reductions in staff and services. Regardless, they continue to work even harder due to larger class sizes, less equipment and materials, and the need to teach and prepare for a new demanding and rigorous curriculum. School leaders and the Board of Education need to genuinely celebrate and recognize staff members who extend themselves beyond the expected, and in a manner that matches the new district mission statement. Possible ideas include staff recognition days, breakfasts, teacher of the month, student selection of a teacher, teacher awards, grade level awards, board meeting recognition of teachers, etc. Finally, the most powerful thank you is a personal conversation between a school leader or board member and a teacher that includes a sincere thank you.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>J. There is an important need to recognize staff for extra effort and accomplishment.</b>	
Responsibility	Administration and Board of Education with staff
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1a On-going (2015-2020)
Comment	Great districts require great teachers – celebrating and recognizing the contributions.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Combine this study with communication team or that which is investigating the Clinton brand, or another one that is district-wide as a result of this study.</li> <li>2. Recognize that the staff do not feel entirely valued.</li> <li>3. Consider contributing factors – communication, culture.</li> <li>4. Recognize the Clinton brand and what is valued by district residents and staff (honor the stories and history).</li> <li>5. Rediscover those opportunities for ritual and ceremony.</li> <li>6. Consider gathering good news announcements at BOE meetings.</li> <li>7. Establish those areas where recognition would have meaning and value to staff (these do not need to be monetary).</li> </ol>
Resources	“The Carrot Principal” Gostick and Elton (building a culture of recognition) “Shaping School Culture” Deal and Peterson (outstanding text)
Evaluation	Resurvey staff in two years.

**K. There is No Process to Preserve the Rich History of the School District. (Communications)**

Background

There are many people connected to the Clinton schools and the community who retired, left the area, or are not in good health. These people hold much of the rich oral history and traditions of the school district. Over time, this rich history and culture is becoming lost unless it is preserved. Many new staff and community residents have little understanding or sensitivity to the background, history – even monuments – on school grounds. They often lack an understanding of “why” something is the way it is or why it changed. By creating a documented written history of the school district in a booklet, the memories and oral history of the school district can be preserved, shared and passed on to new students, staff and residents. The cost for the booklet could be minimal and spearheaded by either the Clinton Foundation or the Clinton Alumni group (this might also re-energize and re-purpose this group). The hardcover book, *Glancing Back at Clinton and Neighboring Communities: The Way it Used to Be*, appears to mourn the loss of the past. There is no similar tribute to the rich history of this school district as it relates to this fine,

historical community. This work would also rebuild district pride and also serve to influence the “brand” to potential homeowners.

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	
<b>K. Creating a documented written history of the school district will preserve the memories and oral history of the school district for future students, staff and residents to appreciate.</b>	
Responsibility	Board of Education and Superintendent
Priority	2 (2016-17); On-going (2017-2020)
Comment	Provides great opportunity to build even closer community bond with joint effort.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Contact and invite the Clinton Foundation or the Clinton Alumni Association to participate and coordinate this endeavor.</li> <li>2) Gather all artifacts from district history.</li> <li>3) Develop history by decades.</li> <li>4) Draft of written and pictorial history – revise, and print.</li> <li>5) Provide copies at school and community events.</li> <li>6) Distribute as part of every school employee orientation.</li> <li>7) Update periodically.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Milestones include establishing committee or coordinating group, and publication of the booklet.

#### **L. Need for Effective Definition of Clinton School District “Brand”- Small Community Which Cares About its Children. (Communication)**

##### Background

The nature of a small community and its individualized care is not always congruent with levels of communication to families. District leadership needs to work with the Board and community to agree on their “brand”, what the district stands for and what parents can expect, and count on, for their students. Clinton should capitalize on the small school, individualized care and quick response to student needs, fine arts program, and core academics. From the community survey, communication to all stakeholders needs to be diverse and include selling the community and district “brand” of small, intimate personal attention. Stakeholders should be more explicit on the mission and goals of the district. Parents want the district to remain mindful of how to capitalize and celebrate the district strengths so that the district’s reputation is preserved, or even enhanced. The leadership team should consider creation of a district brochure for realtors to distribute when families are seeking housing. This would also be posted on the web site. One of the several previously suggested committees created through the Plan should assume this responsibility (probably communications).

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	
<b>L. Communication to all stakeholders needs to be diverse and include promoting the community and district “brand” of small, intimate personal attention.</b>	
Responsibility	All constituents
Priority	1 (2015-16); 1a On-going (2017-18 & 2019-20)
Comment	Everyone associated with the district are able to articulate the elements that form the “brand” of Clinton – what it stands for and what makes it unique.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seat district-community team. This team may also consider watching Ted Talks, <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action.html">http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action.html</a></li> <li>2. Google “brand” and review a few articles about companies that have rebooted their brand.</li> <li>3. Describe the qualities of this district that you feel are invaluable (use report for guidance)</li> <li>4. Rank these qualities from most influential and valuable to least.</li> <li>5. Agree on the top five which are the “sticky” messages. This is your “elevator” speech (so succinct that it can be shared in the time it takes to ride an elevator)</li> <li>6. Consider creating a district brochure with these sticky messages and photos exemplifying this brand. Brochure can be distributed to new parents and realtors.</li> <li>7. Use website and all messaging revolves around these themes so brand is continuously reinforced.</li> <li>8. Teachers consider what specific strategies they can use that reinforces the Clinton brand and plan on systematizing this through the district (or if it already exists, label it as such over and over)</li> </ol>
Resources	Committee time
Monitor/Evaluation	1. Community survey to determine if hope about the district’s future is improving and community feels that there is congruence between brand and value of the district.

### **M. Systematic Periodic Enrollment Projections Should Be Developed. (District Leadership)**

#### Background

The Clinton Central School District has experienced a decline in student enrollment over the past 7-10 years. At the current enrollment size, a small fluctuation of children at a specific grade level can translate into an additional required class section with major implications on the school budget. Further, as buildings need future repair and renovation, accurately projecting anticipated future enrollment will assist in managing and making long term strategic decisions. Enrollment should be measured, reported and projected at least bi-annually or one per year. A template needs to be provided. The consultants developed initial projections which suggest a leveling of student enrollment over the next several years after a previous decrease in enrollment.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>M. Student enrollment should be measured, reported and projected at least bi-annually or once per year ideally.</b>	
Responsibility	Central office staff.
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1 (2016-17); 1 (2018-19)
Comment	Every other year. Projections will assist in budgeting long term.
Basic Steps	1) Template for enrollment developed. (DONE for 2014-15) 2) Student enrollment over past ten years inputted. (DONE for 2014-15) 3) Enrollment projected using Cohort Survival method. (DONE) 4) Enrollment data provided to the Board of Education and administration. (DONE 2014-15)
Monitor/Evaluation	Enrollment projections delivered and shared with the Board of Education and Superintendent at least bi-annually.

**N. A Maintenance Plan for Critical Operating Equipment Needs to be Developed.  
(Facilities/Grounds)**

Background

The Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds maintains all critical equipment. However, there is a lack of back up staff supporting this position. The amount of equipment being maintained by one person over the number of buildings, square footage and systems is significant. There is also some need for a plan to inventory, maintain and routinely replace motors and other types of equipment. A formal replacement plan could assist in long range facility planning and reducing mechanical breakdowns that could impact on the learning environment. **Replacement parts** are often no longer stocked in the district creating a less efficient flow of repairs due to order lag time.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>N. A plan needs to be developed to maintain motors and other types of equipment.</b>	
Responsibility	Superintendent of Buildings Grounds or other.
Priority	2 (2016-17); 2a On-going (2017-2020)
Comment	A need to formalize the plan and multiple staff to support and maintain equipment.
Basic Steps	1) Build inventory of mechanical equipment – spreadsheet or commercial software program. 2) Track maintenance and parts, breakdowns. 3) Periodic report to Board Facilities/Grounds committee.
Monitor/Evaluation	Observe periodic (annual) report to the Board Facilities/Grounds Committee

## O. Process for Work Orders needs to be Consistently Followed. (Facilities/Grounds)

### Background

Repairs are processed through a work order system that is not consistently followed by staff requesting assistance which leads to frustration when repairs are not completed in a timely manner. To expedite the process (or circumvent it), staff report personal needs to a head or charge custodian. By not following a systematic plan to address repairs by priority and sequence of report, these repairs detract from the daily work of custodial and maintenance staff. The maintenance staff and supervision have been reduced over time, and are responding as quickly as possible with the staffing, and support that is available. Many of the custodial and some of the maintenance staff lack the technical skills or abilities to conduct repairs. More communication between maintenance and the school leadership is also suggested to address the perception of delayed reaction time and determine possible solutions.

ACTION PLAN	
O. Repairs are processed through a work order system that is not consistently followed leading to frustration when repairs are not completed in a timely manner.	
Responsibility	Superintendent, Administration & Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds
Priority	2 (2014-15); 2a On-going (2016-17; 2018-19)
Comment	After review of existing process, there will need follow up and on-going review to ensure consistent practice.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The above groups should meet to review the work order process.</li> <li>2) Determine where process is breaking down.</li> <li>3) Adjust process or re-commit to it and inform staff.</li> <li>4) Meet after implementation to determine if working. Track specific repair area for timeliness and provide this analysis to the Superintendent and Board of Education.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Superintendent will need to query staff and principals to determine if response time and communication has increased.

## P. Clearly Defined Process for Budget Reduction Decisions. (Financial Management and Planning)

### Background

Most school districts are now being faced annually with the need to make reductions in programs, staff and student services. Local Boards of Education and even superintendents sometimes make these reduction decisions based upon a short term perspective, or based upon political pressures. If a Board of Education were to judge the priorities of making reductions using a template, some of the short comings of budget decisions can be removed. There should be a template developed for making and prioritizing budgetary decisions. The template should include: 1) the item; 2) children impacted; 3) cost savings (after any aid is subtracted); 4) impact of loss or reduction on children, staff and community; 5) difficulty in reinstating program at a later date; 6) relationship to district mission and graduation requirements; and 7) any alternative method for providing the program or service. The school district should carefully examine the detailed implications to students when making a decision to eliminate or reduce a program or service. A template/process could be easily developed that would ask key questions, examine impact of schedules, courses, class size, and preparation for college and the workplace. Reductions have long standing aggregated impact. Each reduction should be examined in the context of the mission and vision of the

school district. Consider a clearly defined procedure for the administrative team to work on the budget with the business administrator and the superintendent. Staff are also asking to be included in reduction conversations and multiple respondents feel that reductions are disproportionately hitting struggling and average students.

ACTION PLAN	
<p><b>P.</b> A Board of Education should evaluate priorities for making reductions using a budget decision template, helping avoid some of the short comings of some decision makers regarding budget decisions and long term impact.</p>	
Responsibility	Board of Education & Administration
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1a On-going (2015-16)
Comment	Will provide a decision template for administration to make budget reduction recommendations with a longer term view of implications.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Board and Administration could build into the budgeting process the seven-step budget priority template listed above.</li> <li>2) The Superintendent and others when making recommendations for potential reductions will use the template.</li> <li>3) The template provides an objective method for reviewing spending priorities and possible reductions.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Implement the template and observe after one budget cycle. Review and modify as needed.

**Q. Technology Planning, Application in Classrooms & Better Support is Needed. (Financial Management and Planning)**

Background

Consider a multi-year replacement program that also includes additional key technology. The Technology Plan should primarily focus on what kinds of instruction will benefit most from technology and focus the plan on it. Infrastructure should be reviewed by others in addition to the Technology Planning Team. The district should have a formal internal team that monitors the technology plan development.

Infrastructure needs to provide consistent support of classroom use of technology. *From teachers:* Instructional technology appears frequently throughout interviews and surveys as a needed area of focus. Reliability, access, repair are all areas to study.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>Q. Technology lacks a well articulated plan for replacement or how to be used to enhance classroom instruction.</b>	
Responsibility	Superintendent, Director of Curriculum, Technology Specialists, Principals
Priority	2 (2015-16); 2a On-going (2016-17; 2018-19)
Comment	The district will need to work closely with the external technology support personnel.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Reform the Technology Planning Team.</li> <li>2) Review existing needs and Plan.</li> <li>3) Consider gathering Technology Plans of other districts for team review.</li> <li>4) Determine critical attributes of other plans that are appealing to Clinton.</li> <li>5) Draft plan and provide summary to faculties of each school for feedback.</li> <li>6) Revise plan as needed.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Evaluate based upon development and implementation of a Technology Plan.

**R. Health Insurance Costs are Very High Compared to Similar School Districts. (Financial Management and Planning)**

Background

Contributions by staff need to be reviewed as well as the various programs being accessed. The costs for the district are out of line compared with similar types and sizes of school districts (statistical neighbors). The legacy costs also threaten the long term sustainability of the district. Recommendation: Implement a health insurance committee or study to evaluate alternatives that are more cost effective.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>R. Implement a health insurance committee or study to evaluate alternatives that are more cost effective.</b>	
Responsibility	Superintendent and Business Administrator
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1a On-going (2015-16)
Comment	A solution could yield significant savings, a health insurance committee could continue to explore ways of containing costs while preserving benefit levels.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Consider formation of Health Insurance Advisory Committee that includes bargaining unit groups, Business Administrator, Board representation, retirees, and an outside insurance consultant or advisor.</li> <li>2) Study alternatives including joining another consortium, look at Canada RX, etc.</li> <li>3) Look at long term projected costs.</li> <li>4) Do an RFP or select more cost effective coverage.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Creation of study, RFP, and selecting of new provider(s).

## S. Academic Intervention Services (AIS) Delivery Review is Needed. (Instruction/Pedagogy)

### Background

There is a need for a written protocol for student placements in Academic Intervention Services. This work could be led by teachers using longitudinal data and observations, such as academic grades, daily performance, and unit tests, followed by progress review throughout the year (RtI). It should also include an appeal process by parents, or guardians. Some of the preliminary identified areas for review:

- a. There is a reading teacher for the primary grade levels (critical for early intervention), however, there is insufficient support for intermediate grades. Therefore, AIS (when it's provided) seems to be sporadic and difficult to provide.
- b. *From parent survey:* Academic assistance for struggling students should be as much a priority as the needs of other students, which includes enrichment and extracurricular opportunities.
- c. AIS programming historically was supplemental to the typical 90 minutes per day of instruction. With the lack of staffing, AIS has become part of the 90 minutes as a pullout vs. a supplement.
- d. Continued needs exist for AIS math.
- e. Our recommendation is to assess the overall value of I-Ready based on student performance vs the amount of time taken from computer lab and other learning experiences. What is cost?
- f. AIS program is sometimes provided through a teaching assistant under the direction of a special education teacher. Consider if this is the most effective model of intervention.
- g. Are AIS criteria prioritized so levels of service vary according to need?
- h. High school - There is a .5 FTE in special education that provides AIS for students in English. This is not a certified teacher to teach in English and there's concern about content knowledge and understanding.

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	
<b>S.</b> There is a need for a written protocol for student placements in Academic Intervention Services.	
Responsibility	Administration and Instructional Staff-Guided Self Study
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1a On-going (2015-16)
Comment	Review and action will facilitate better support and improvement in achievement.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish entrance/exit criterion for K-12. Share vision of what you desire.</li> <li>2. Determine your goals for AIS.</li> <li>3. Research NYS ED and NYSUT Information Bulletin and build knowledge of current requirements and allowances.</li> <li>3. Consider criteria for developing and evaluating intervention programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research base</li> <li>• Needs Assessment</li> <li>• Alignment to CCSS</li> <li>• Admission Criteria (multiple evidence)</li> <li>• Determine levels of service/intensity based on admission criteria</li> <li>• Professional Development and Planning</li> <li>• Parental Involvement and Communication</li> <li>• Resources/Budget</li> <li>• Scheduling</li> <li>• Completion/Exit from Program</li> <li>• Program Evaluation</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Design student performance template that includes key performance indicators. Consider disaggregating by ethnicity and gender. The team should consider the use of longitudinal data and observations, such as academic grades, daily performance, and unit tests, followed by progress review throughout the year (Rtl).</li> <li>5. Consider the overall value of I-Ready based on student performance vs the amount of time taken from computer lab and other learning experiences. Examine the cost and value.</li> <li>6. Once established, match staffing to need in ELA and math per budget availability.</li> <li>7. Develop scheduling philosophy for AIS services at each level (push-in vs pull-out).</li> <li>8. Develop AIS instructional priorities for each level (e.g.at 6-12 level blend of pre-teaching, review, vocabulary, writing in response to prompts, etc.).</li> <li>9. Develop consistent district forms and parent communication, design parent appeal.</li> <li>10. Establish effective use of teaching assistants to support program.</li> <li>11. Develop district communication plan to colleagues.</li> </ol>
Resources	District Team
Monitor/Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. AIS plan is approved by the BOE</li> <li>2. Plan is monitored per design above for compliance, student performance.</li> </ol>

## T. Response to Intervention (Rti) and Teacher Support Team Processes Need Review. (Instruction & Pedagogy)

### Background

A coordinated plan and ownership of progress monitoring needs to be provided. Staff collect six weeks of data and many find that the collection of appropriate data is cumbersome. Since the TST only meets for an hour one afternoon a week, the time devoted to each child is approximately 30 minutes which results in few students being reviewed weekly. The process of the TST needs to be reviewed for efficiency and support of both teachers and struggling learners. To combat the issue described here, many grade levels have tried to have their own grade level TST but with the common core implementation this has been limited. This could also result in an inconsistent approach. AIS and RTI and other support services appear to be lacking at the middle school. The culture of district is to value the whole child and not be as concerned about test scores. This philosophy could be incongruent with doing whatever it takes to enhance student performance.

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	
<b>T. The process of the TST needs to be reviewed for efficiency and support of both teachers and struggling learners.</b>	
Responsibility	Administration and Instructional Staff
Priority	1 (2015-16); 1a On-going (2016-17 & 2017-18)
Comment	One year delay behind AIS review. Year 1 research, year two-implement K-8, year three-implement secondary level)
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seat Literacy Team</li> <li>2. Review NYSED guidelines for Rti . Use Buffalo State <a href="http://www.nysrti.org">www.nysrti.org</a></li> <li>3. Research and build knowledge about Rti. Use the following link to complete the "School Readiness for Rti Implementation" <a href="http://www.scred.k12.mn.us/rt_i/minnesota_rti_center">http://www.scred.k12.mn.us/rt_i/minnesota_rti_center</a> Doing what Works;Rti Intervention Planning Template* Additional Resource from Doing What Works clearinghouse <a href="http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/rti_reading_pg_021809.pdf">http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/rti_reading_pg_021809.pdf</a> "School Readiness for Rti: A Self-Assessment" from Sopris West Educational Services* Jim Wright <a href="http://www.interventioncentral.org/">http://www.interventioncentral.org/</a> Response to Intervention: Blueprints for Implementation (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.)* Arkansas Literacy Matrix : <a href="http://www.arstudentsuccess.org/">http://www.arstudentsuccess.org/</a> Intervention Central <a href="http://www.interventioncentral.org/">http://www.interventioncentral.org/</a> <u>Enhancing RTI: How to Ensure Success with Effective Classroom Instruction and Intervention</u> (Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey</li> <li>4. Develop referral forms, update child study team protocols</li> <li>5. Develop research-based instructional practices and implement with fidelity</li> <li>6. Develop Measurement Plan: student performance tracking templates and thresholds (progress monitoring). Determine assessment tools. Integrate data collection to inform decisions</li> <li>7. Provide PD on philosophy, process and strategies</li> </ol> <p>* Sample documents and Rti plan provided copy provided, additional list of websites provided, sample plan provided</p>
Monitor/Evaluation	Milestones include creating evaluation team, developing research based practices, and completion of a measurement plan. Plan and progress shared with Board.

## U. A Professional Learning Community Model to Enhance Effectively Using Student Data. (Instruction & Pedagogy)

### Background

The teaching staff would benefit from additional coaching with using student performance data to inform instruction in a more immediate way, particularly in grades 6-12. Since some teachers are in single or small departments or grade levels, they have few colleagues (or no one) to compare data with, or an ability to note trends and themes. The use of student performance data and how to use it productively is seen across multiple areas of district instructional operation: Professional Learning Communities (PLC's), RtI, entrance into AIS, vibrancy of curriculum maps, and use of common assessments and noting performance on specific curricular areas and sharing of best practices among professionals. Consider the use of Mike Schmoker's work in addition to that of the Dufour's (PLC) which both address our obligation to provide a viable and guaranteed curriculum to all students. Institutionalization of the PLC model is needed including defining critical attributes of the model. This would include use of student performance data at an entry level and at a level for teachers who are more comfortable with its use.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>U.</b> Utilize Professional Learning Communities to provide coaching with using student performance data to inform instruction.	
Responsibility	Administration and Instructional Staff
Priority	2 (2015-16); 2a On-going (2016-2020)
Comment	The culture of teaching and learning will be enhanced with this implementation.
Basic Steps	<p>1) Organize a <b>PLC Coaching Academy</b> the purpose of which is to support your teachers and teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Redefine PLC critical attributes and conduct an audit to ascertain current levels of team functioning which leads to areas of future</li> <li>- Define collective inquiry and use of student performance data</li> <li>- Describe attributes of highly functioning teams (meeting protocols, forms, group norms, structures)</li> <li>- Define SMART goals and consider development of team templates or worksheets</li> <li>- Define interventions for students not making progress</li> <li>- Consider strategies for creating time for teachers to meet</li> <li>- Consider flow of PLC work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop collaborative structure</li> <li>▪ Define essential content</li> <li>▪ Define unit design based on student performance</li> <li>▪ Refine common assessments</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Create communication plan</li> <li>- Develop additional professional development in key areas of PLC work</li> </ul>
Resources	<p>"Making Teamwork Meaningful: Leading Progress-Driven Collaboration in a PLC at Work (2013)" Ferriter, Graham and Wight</p> <p>"Cultures Built to Last: Systemic PLCs at Work (2013)" Dufour and Fullan</p> <p>"The Handbook of SMART School Teams (2002)" Conzemius and O'Neill</p> <p>Schmoker, "Results Now"</p> <p>Paul Bambrick-Santoyo: "Driven by Data," "Leverage Leadership"</p>
Monitor/Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observation of teams</li> <li>2. Self-evaluation using team rubrics</li> </ol>

## V. With Common Core Implementation, Discussion is Needed Regarding Writing, Modification to the Modules, and Consistency Across Grade Levels. (Instruction & Pedagogy)

### Background

K-8 teachers are using modules across content areas. Teachers are trying close reading and evidence based claims. At the high school they will be taking Common Core ELA Regents as well as the traditional assessment to see what students need to be able to do. HS - ELA and math will begin unpacking modules when they are all available. The various high school departments – pre- Common Core, had a familiarity of what and how children were prepared before entering their classroom. Now, teachers are uncomfortable with the changes and are asking for greater need to see vertical and horizontal common core implementation. Professional development should also continue to focus on the common core state standards (CCSS). From teachers: continued provision of time for teachers to meet in teams to review module resources. Furthermore,

- a. With ELA modules, writing is emphasized to a lesser degree so professional development is required to incorporate writing into ELA modules. Optionally, create and manage a way for writing to occur across the week.
- b. Modifications to modules at the elementary level is recommended by NYS. They are to be used as a resource. However, this creates concern and worry at other grade levels that students will come to the grade level with gaps in knowledge content understanding and application. It would be helpful to have a K-5 review of prioritized standards by grade level and how these standards are being met. If these adjustments are being made, there needs to be an overall objective, protocol for how concepts/resources are eliminated, and the impact of these changes on grade level, or course, content.
- c. It is recommended that teachers use the sample and released test items from Engage NY and compare their own student performance against these questions.
- d. Teachers want to see consistency in process and want to have some level of continuity so they have an understanding of what other grade levels do resulting in better articulation.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>V.</b> Planning is required regarding Common Core curriculum implementation including writing, modification to the modules, consistent approaches across disciplines and grade levels.	
Responsibility	Administration and Instructional Staff
Priority	1 (2014-15); 1a On-going (2015-2020)
Comment	All schools will need to do this – the best schools will do it very well.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By grade level, review and isolate those CCSS standards that are priority for that grade level. Review ELA first, then math.</li> <li>2. Send these back out to all teachers for review and comment.</li> <li>3. Bring vertical teams together to trace the CCSS standards vertically through the K-8 grades.</li> <li>4. Moving systematically through the modules, trace those selected standards through the modules and begin reducing those areas that are not priority. This will give teachers time back in their daily/weekly schedules.</li> <li>5. After year 1, review NYS 3-8 performance data to ensure that critical content is still being taught. Amend modules as needed, or combine with other resources.</li> </ol>
Resources	1. Substitute time; After school time; Teacher leadership
Monitor/Evaluation	NYS assessment data, observations by principals and superintendent

## W. K-12 Curriculum Audit & Vision is Needed. (Instruction & Pedagogy)

### Background

Other than a de facto alignment as a result of module use, Clinton should consider a formal curriculum audit that includes teachers. Select one curricular area per year and measure the curriculum against what is actually taught in addition to student performance evidence. The School Alliance for Continuous Improvement (SACI) has an excellent model. Continue and ensure alignment of curriculum vertically and within courses. A K-12 curriculum administrator perspective may wish to be considered. This review may occur annually upon full adopting of modules to ascertain alignment of module methodology, pedagogy and content.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>W. A formal curriculum audit that includes teachers should occur– one discipline annually.</b>	
Responsibility	Administration and Instructional Staff
Priority	1 (2016-2020)
Comment	Should occur after initial work on Common Core. External review, by content area, beginning with ELA, one discipline per year.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select review team members.</li> <li>2. Conduct a full document review – unit plans, assessments, etc.</li> <li>3. Create key interview questions for instructional staff to measure content area instruction.</li> <li>4. Review student performance data.</li> <li>5. Note gaps in performance and study units and assessments for evidence of gaps.</li> <li>6. Make recommendations, celebrate best practices.</li> </ol>
Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Substitute Time</li> <li>2. Possible assistance of SACI, or consultant</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Instructional modules are linked vertically</li> <li>2. Key curricular areas are reviewed, addressed, and updated</li> </ol>

## X. A District Technology Use Policy will Provide Guidance and Guide Appropriate Use of District Resources. (Instruction & Pedagogy)

### Background

Absent an **Acceptable Use Policy**, the BOE needs to develop a District Technology Use Policy that includes: 1) Who has permission to use district equipment; 2) Define appropriate and legal use of district owned equipment and network; 3) district right to access and monitor use of equipment including e-mails, communications, etc.; and 4) Use and transportation of district owned equipment from school to school, and/or off site. The **Technology Plan** should focus on 1) how technology should be used in classrooms to support instruction and equipment needed; and 2) professional development for teachers and others needed for implementation of the Plan.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>X.</b> The Board of Education needs to develop and implement a Technology Use policy to ensure appropriate use of district technology resources.	
Responsibility	Administration and Board of Education, possibly Technology Committee or Board Policy sub-committee
Priority	2 (2014-15); 2a On-going (2015-16)
Comment	A board policy will guide use and create a formal expectation for appropriate use and conduct.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gather samples of AOU's from other districts and NYS School Boards.</li> <li>2. Consider the specific needs of the Clinton district.</li> <li>3. Amend or edit a preferred existing policy from another district.</li> <li>4. Share with BOE for first reading, and final approval.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Board adoption

## Y. Instructional Strategies that Richly Engage All Students. (Instruction & Pedagogy)

### Background

From parent, community and student surveys, APPR documents and walk-throughs, it is recommended that professional development be devoted to the use of open-ended questioning and increasing student engagement, 6-12. With the implementation of Common Core, APPR, testing and accountability, educators have tended to narrow rich and engaging teaching practices, favoring targeted curricular and assessment goals for students. Teaching practices should be rich and exciting for students while still also addressing modules and the Common Core. A theme from parent and student surveys was the need to offer choice, creative projects, formative assessments (clicker technology, etc.) and other tools such as instructional technology to raise the level of student engagement and interest in participation. From surveys feedback, there is a need to learn how to design alternate ways to measure student learning rather than through traditional multiple-choice measures. Examples include exploration of projects, creation of rubrics, short and long answer using Common Core evidenced-based claims, writing for argument, PowerPoint, etc. Students can, and should, be able to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways.

- a. Consider classroom strategies that are creative and keep district on forefront of innovation.
- b. A strong number of comments indicated a need for more creative instructional strategies. These comments were not always linked with Common Core modules.
- c. Students report a need for learning to be more “fun” and by that they mean, “engaging.” They report less use of choice, projects, and cooperative learning. Students benefit from the “social construction of knowledge (Vygotsky)” and tools such as these provide a means for students to process their learning with language and thus accelerate learning and improve retention.
- d. Increased use of projects and other tools to assess learning. Projects also provide a motivational element of choice.
- e. Investigation of classroom methodologies that link high participation with critical thinking and debate on issues that appeal to young adults.
- f. Students expressed a concern about teaching styles in that some teachers spend a great amount of time preparing students for tests and talking about test strategies perhaps are not spending enough time helping teach students to understand and apply the content.
- g. Differentiated instruction for high ability students. These students reported often in this survey that they were not always challenged.
- h. Parents request additional consideration of enrichment at all levels.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>Y.</b> Focused discussion is needed among teachers and administrators about increasing student engagement regarding classroom instruction including questioning techniques, choice, and alternative assessments.	
Responsibility	Administration and Instructional Staff
Priority	1 (2014-2017); 1a On-going (2017-2020)
Comment	A greater focus on how teachers can promote student engagement in classroom learning will yield positive academic, behavior and attendance results.
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using existing district team, review the following list of actionable evidence gathered from APPR observations, walk-throughs, student survey, parent survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student engagement – technology, added choice, projects</li> <li>• Assessments – by project, increase use of multiple measures</li> <li>• Questioning – for higher level thinking, per Danielson rubric</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Investigate test preparation in classrooms as an instructional tool.</li> <li>3. Prioritize high leverage strategies that will be the focus of professional development over the next three years.</li> <li>4. Consider teacher leadership and an academy designed for teachers to teach teachers.</li> <li>5. Bring in consultants (BOCES or other) as needed to supplement your delivery of focused professional development.</li> </ol>
Resources	1. Substitute time and after school time will be needed
Monitor/Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consider student survey re-administration in two years</li> <li>2. APPR evaluations demonstrate evidence of additional strategies</li> <li>3. Student performance is positively impacted</li> </ol>

## **Z. Data Dashboard and Data Driven Decision Making. (Instruction and Pedagogy)**

### Background

Given the overall performance of students against like districts and since this is part of the Regents Reform Agenda, it is strongly recommended that a unified set of key indicators be established with input from the staff and community that alerts all staff about their progress against the district action plan and overall student performance within buildings and district-wide.

ACTION PLAN	
<b>Z.</b> Identify Set of Key Indicators that are Used as a Progress Benchmark Against the District Action Plans.	
Responsibility	Administration and Superintendent. Input from teachers and community.
Priority	1 (2016-17); 1a On-going (2017-2020)
Basic Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine team who will be responsible for selecting, compiling and evaluating student data.</li> <li>2. Encourage input from others on what data to collect.</li> <li>3. Gather student data over time and analyze and compare for growth.</li> <li>4. Share with BOE and community annually.</li> </ol>
Monitor/Evaluation	Form team or determine roles. Collect data, compare and report out.



*Part 2: Companion to the Strategic Plan*

# **Analysis, Observations & Actionable Items**

*Vision 2020*

Clinton Central School District  
Board of Education

*May, 2014*

*Dr. Kevin S. Baughman & Associates  
Dr. Deborah Shea, Associate*

# Clinton Central School District

Clinton, New York

## **2013-14 Clinton Board of Education**

Ms. Mary Lou Lauchert	President
Mr. Michael Wade	Vice-President
Ms. Amy Franz	
Mr. William Huggins	
Mr. Jim Korfonta	
Ms. Erica Shaw	
Ms. Courtney Zoller	
Ms. Julia Scranton	District Clerk

## **Clinton Administration**

Mr. Matthew Reilly	Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Joseph Barretta	Business Administrator
Ms. Kathy Fonda	Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Instruction
Mr. Steve Marcus	Elementary School Principal
Mr. Shaun Carney	Middle School Principal
Mr. Matthew Lee	High School Principal

## *Strategic Planning Consultants*

Dr. Kevin Baughman	Senior Consultant
Dr. Deborah Shea	Consultant

*This project was made possible through the generosity of the Clinton Central School District Foundation*

## Clinton Central School District Companion Document to Strategic Plan

*Vision 2020*

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## Purpose of this Document

This document is the companion to the Clinton School District Comprehensive Strategic Plan. It is Part Two of the strategic plan documentation. It contains analysis, observations and actionable items that although important, do not rise to the level of significance to be included in the Comprehensive Strategic Plan. They are not included in the Comprehensive Strategic Plan so that it is streamlined, focusing only on the highest leveraged action items providing substantive positive impact across the school system. Information contained in this document may provide insight or analysis and may suggest future action, or actionable items. Any actionable item in this companion document is typically a single step, can be addressed at any future time, and have more limited system-wide impact.

The topics within each category of the Observations and Findings include 8 topic areas as follows:

1. Board of Education
2. Building Leadership
3. Communication
4. District Leadership
5. Facilities/Grounds
6. Financial Resource Management and Planning
7. Instruction/Pedagogy
8. Professional Development

## Overview of Process

The Clinton Central School District underwent an external strategic analysis from December, 2013 through March, 2014. The intent was to identify district strengths, and areas for improvement regarding staff, process, and outcomes. The district contracted with an outside consultant, Dr. Kevin Baughman & Associates, to conduct the analysis and utilizing the results, develop a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the district. The multi-year strategic plan covers the period from 2014-2019 and is called Vision 2020. Data was collected and analyzed from:

- school district documents (agendas for professional development, faculty meeting agendas, etc.);
- New York State Education student performance results;
- objective independent observations;
- classroom walk-through observations;
- over 55 small group interviews and focus groups;
- four on-line surveys – one each for instructional staff, students, parents, and community members;
- leadership and Board of Education workshops;
- a community forum;
- review of APPR narratives; and
- review of Rubicon Atlas mapping software

## Analysis, Observations & Actionable Items

*These are observations or finding that provides insight or analysis and may suggest future action, or recommendation. They are not included in the Comprehensive Strategic Plan so that it is streamlined, focusing only on the highest leveraged action items. Any actionable item is typically a single step, can be addressed at any future time, and have more limited system-wide impact.*

### 1. Board of Education

- a. The Board of Education needs to agree on what the **real priorities should be**-- moving toward greater collaboration within the board, district and outside with the town government and perhaps Hamilton College-- there are many resources – and the need to engage and sustain these relationships
- b. **District Climate:** There appears to be a sense (from many different vantage points) the need to improve bargaining unit and leadership/board of education relationships – exacerbated by some years without a teacher contract and the recent financial challenges
- c. **Sub-committee Work** of the Board: the Board of Education should: 1) ensure that all board sub-committees have a clear written role established in policy; 2) that role should focus on informing and recommending to the entire board; 3) written minutes of the sub-committees should be kept and placed on line; and 4) all sub-committees must understand the delicate balance between making policy and managing the district on a daily basis.
- d. **Visibility:** The Board of Education is strongly encouraged to be more visible and be involved in various classrooms. They should be in the classrooms to observe the needs of children and the work that's being done by the teaching staff. Staff and administration will appreciate the investment of time. This should occur periodically. In most districts, board members regularly first check-in at the office or make a prior appointment to visit.

### 2. Building Leadership

- a. **School Resource Officer:** needs to be more aware of issues in the building. More collaboration in terms of communication and sharing information helps protect and create a secure environment. We need to set up a framework of communication and expectations. SRO/Principals should create protocol defining what types of issues are shared and a process for sharing critical information (vs. informal). *(Actionable Item)*

### 3. Communication

- a. **Volunteers:** The district should consider inviting and recruiting volunteers to help out in classrooms. *From community:* Encourage volunteerism in secondary schools and find ways for talents of community members to be utilized in the classrooms. *(Actionable Item)*

#### 4. District Leadership

- a. **Recruitment/Hiring:** The Business Office will have the opportunity to replace or reorganize based on retirements including recruiting, training, etc. for both the AP and Payroll positions in 2014-2015 assuming the two employees retire. There are little or no job descriptions or clear duties and the roles of various positions are often times unclear.
- b. **District Climate:** There appears to be a sense from many different vantage points the need to improve bargaining unit and leadership/board of education relationships – exacerbated by some years without a teacher contract and the recent financial challenges.
- c. **BOCES:** Through budget staff reductions, the districts contracts with BOCES for certain part-time itinerant positions. The problem with this is it locks the scheduling because the BOCES person can only commit to either a block in the morning or a block in the afternoon. Due to the small size of the Clinton school district they use many BOCES itinerant staff. Because these staff members are shared with other districts, they have limited schedule making flexibility challenging. Consider the following from the 2012-13 BOCES bill:

Service	Final Contract	Net Aid %	Net Cost to Clinton	Comments
Technology Coordinator	\$47,195	36%	\$30,005	<i>Need to determine unit cost /.1 FTE to compare – likely cost effective</i>
School Psychologist	\$70,810	41%	\$45,684	<i>Need to determine unit cost /.1 FTE to compare- likely cost effective</i>
Spanish Itinerant	\$47,850	15%	\$40,826	<i>If itinerant is .6 FTE, the 1.0 cost for position is \$68,043 – which would justify a 1.0 local hire</i>
French Itinerant	\$34,272	53%	\$16,202	<i>If itinerant is .5 FTE, the 1.0 cost for position is \$32,404 – which would not justify a 1.0 local hire</i>

- d. **Foreign language teachers** cause challenges in the middle and high school schedules since they are shared positions with other districts. This causes a lack of availability demanded by the schedule, limits the schedules of regular faculty, and reduces course offerings and schedule opportunities for students. When considering the lack of cost benefit – especially for Spanish and possibly for French – it may make more sense to hire locally. (*Actionable Item*)
- e. **Student Recognition Program-Academic and Athletic:** The district has a formalized recognition program for outstanding graduates – an Academic Wall of Fame – but the location is out of the way on second floor so few visitors or students get to enjoy and recognize the outstanding people being recognized. Relocate the Wall to a main entrance area. Further, there could be an annual dinner, or ceremony where recipients are recognized. You may wish to consider having a recipient as a potential graduation speaker. (*Actionable Item*)

#### 5. Facilities/Grounds

- a. Fan motor noise is excessive in the uni-vents in middle school classrooms. The background noise impacts students' ability to hear instruction. (*Actionable Item*)

- b. **Co-generation system:** Due to either a lack of maintenance several years ago or the engineering design, the co-generation system at the high school has not operated for more than 5 years and is sitting idle. The district needs to evaluate the opportunity and costs to re-use the system which could provide additional power and possibly shed excess peak demand, reducing overall energy costs and demand charges.

## 6. Financial Resource Management and Planning

- a. Clinton is stuck in the middle. It has dollar needs but it's not poor enough to receive large amount of state aid nor wealthy enough to not need it.
- b. **Hamilton College partnership:** Has been providing funds to the Clinton schools including the *better chance* program at Hamilton College, the Town Gown fund and since 2006, a municipal contributions agreement otherwise known as MCA that is \$240,000 per year. As a valued community member, their continued influential presence in governance and volunteerism, would benefit the students.
- c. **Special Education:** Clinton should be building the funding for students with disabilities budget on an individual basis by spreadsheet to actually cost out each child. Study the ratios in terms of cost efficiencies. Given the ebb and flow of new students to the district and newly classified students, consider a way ensure that these changes are included in budget projections to avoid over spending the budget or further erosion of fund balance. This is a common practice among many school districts. Check and monitor the OT/PT services carefully and evaluate the cost and do a periodic RFP or request for proposal to ensure cost compare competition and cost-effectiveness. (*Actionable Item*)

## 7. Instructional/Pedagogy

- a. **Advanced Placement:** There were some common perceptions shared that the district was pursuing Advanced Placement courses at the expense of addressing middle level and struggling children's needs.
- b. **Special education:** In early June during pre-K screening many of the recommendations for OT PT and other therapies are not resolved in a timely manner, sometimes lasting until January of the subsequent year.
- c. **Distance Learning: From community:** Explore in order to remain competitive with course offerings for students to remain competitive to what other districts can offer.
- d. **APPR:** Consider a way to create common "look for's" across school when engaging in unannounced. This becomes the source of PD at faculty, department meetings and through the PD center. (*Actionable Item*)
- e. **Secondary schedule:** Some departments appear interested in the alternate days schedule with a double/single - one day would be 39 minutes the next day would be 78 minutes, providing opportunities do much more hands-on and an intensive work with students and collaborative student

groups during a period to assist support and implementation of the common core standards. The scheduling issue should be reviewed/explored for possible benefits and possible implementation. *(Actionable Item)*

f. **Student Learning Climate** *(from student survey):*

- 1) The six graders in the middle school observe bullying but feel that it more likely occurs in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. There appears to be more cyber-bullying going on than in school.
- 2) Although students can leave the campus for lunch, those that stay behind wish that cafeteria food was better. One lamented the loss of the salad bar.
- 3) *(From Student Focus Group)* Students perceive that lots of teachers want to be your best friend and that they tend to “baby us” as students. This often times gives us a false confidence about a particular subject. They give us extra credit for lots of nonacademic things like service credit for example. Then when we finally taken AP exam or even the Regents we often times can get steamrolled because we were led to believe that we could do it when fact we weren't ready for that exam. This speaks to the question of rigor for highly able students.
- 4) *(Focus Group)* Students would like to see student government have a bigger say in helping make decisions about the school – anything that affects them.
- 5) Continued district-wide focus on verbal bullying, or reframed as being kind to one another. School-wide and class-wide activities to pull students together are suggestions.
- 6) Continue to consider ways to provide more experiences for students that broadens their interaction with students of varying backgrounds and ethnicities.

## 8. Professional Development

- a. **Mentoring:** reductions may be impacting NYS requirement for Superintendent to sign off on mentoring for teachers’ professional certification.
- b. **My learning plan:** approvals remain pending for a long time and they are in put in infrequently and sometimes teachers go to programs without prior approval because it takes so long to get the approval process approved.
- c. **Governance of teacher center:** Consider addressing teacher development needs within the teacher center current framework. Expectations and processes may need to be more clearly defined. The governance of the teacher center needs to be reviewed. An advisory group of teachers might benefit planning and communication and would help provide input for course offerings and direction for professional development and the PD Center. *(Actionable Item)*
- d. **Support Staff:** Professional development for support staff is limited. Consider identifying the needs of this group and develop a plan to address key instructional focus areas. *(Actionable Item)*
- e. **New Hires & Procedures:** Forms, directions, and procedures are lacking regarding all personnel functions. Design a program for new staff in new roles, update job descriptions, and support staff evaluation instruments. *(Actionable Item)*
- f. **Teaching Assistants:** Invite to PD on common core, etc. so they can be more effective. *(Actionable Item)*

## “Statistical Neighbors”: Comparative Analysis of Student Achievement

### Purpose of the Statistical Analysis and Comparisons

The purpose of this analysis is to compare Clinton Central Schools fiscally and academically to similar school districts sharing common wealth and student enrollment in New York State. Gaps or differences will raise further questions or generate possible conclusions and actions. Data was based upon three years (2009-2012) of fiscal information from the New York State Education Department Fiscal Analysis and Research Unit; [http://www.oms.nysed.gov/faru/Profiles/profiles\\_cover.html](http://www.oms.nysed.gov/faru/Profiles/profiles_cover.html). Data shown for each school district is the average over three years of data so data is not skewed by a single occurrence or data anomaly.

### New York State School “Statistical Neighbors” Selection Criteria

Selection of similar schools was primarily based upon the wealth of the school district, with a secondary selection using enrollment. The Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) is computed by New York State and is a fair measure of a school district’s property and income wealth computed per student. The CWR is then compared against all districts in New York State. The average district wealth is 1.00. Most school districts in upstate New York are below the 1.00 average due to the high property and income wealth of downstate New York. Based upon Clinton’s CWR of approximately .742, districts within an approximate range of Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) between .68 and .87 were selected to generate similar wealth districts. The three year CWR average of the selected districts was .79, versus .74 for Clinton. Next, districts were extracted from the geographical downstate area including Long Island and New York City due to other demographic dissimilarities. Further, districts were extracted from the sort list with school enrollments outside the 862 and 1,899 with Clinton being 1,422 combined average daily membership (CADM). Finally, the New Hartford school district was added due to its similar nature and geographical nature. New Hartford slightly skews data due to its larger enrollment than the remainder of the school districts selected.

The final list of ten “Statistical Fiscal Neighbors”:

CAIRO-DURHAM  
 CAZENOVIA  
 COXSACKIE ATHENS  
 DOVER  
 GENESEO  
 GREENVILLE  
 HIGHLAND  
 KINDERHOOK  
 NEW HARTFORD  
 TUPPERLAKE

### Districts Selected for the Instructional Comparative Analysis

Instructional comparisons were made utilizing many different test measures. Due to the complexity of analyzing and representing this complex and comprehensive data into meaningful graphs, charts or tables, the

original list of statistical neighbors was reduced to six other school districts. Five of these school districts were randomly selected – since they were all reasonably similar statistically – and New Hartford was added due to its geographical proximity as previously discussed.

The final list of six “Statistical Instructional Neighbors”:

CAZENOVIA  
COXSACKIE ATHENS  
GREENVILLE  
HIGHLAND  
KINDERHOOK  
NEW HARTFORD

## Academic Comparisons

### English Language Arts, grades 3-8 (2009-2012)

Using a multi-year analysis, Clinton performs very well against competitive districts. Across this grade level span, the two districts whose performance is superior to Clinton are Cazenovia and New Hartford. The percentages in each box are based upon combined Level 3 and Level 4 performance. Two districts, New Hartford and Cazenovia, are consistently districts that perform as well, or better than, Clinton.

ELA Comparisons – Average % over three years						
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8
Clinton	78	71	70	68	62	56
Cazenovia	77	83	69	77	71	67
Coxsackie	60	67	54	64	59	53
Kinderhook	61	59	57	57	52	57
New Hartford	72	75	72	74	68	72
Highland	62	59	53	57	48	45
Greenville	46	56	53	54	50	50

In grade 3-8, performance in ELA remains fairly stable across all three years. Averaging the percentage performance in each of three years, somewhat diminishes the small swings from year-to-year. However, New Hartford’s performance ranges from 2-6 percentage points in grades 3-7. In grade 8, that difference increases to 14 percentage points.

### Mathematics, grades 3-8

The same formula and process was applied to mathematics. Students in Clinton find more competition in this content area compared to ELA. The instances of outperformance were in the range of Improving this small magnitude of performance in grade 7, is achievable. Once again, we see that the two districts that Clinton should use as targets are New Hartford and Cazenovia.

Math Comparisons – Average % over three years						
Grade	3	4	5	6	7	8
Clinton	79	68	73	70	61	63
Cazenovia	76	91	86	79	88	84
Coxsackie	60	69	58	70	65	54
Kinderhook	59	70	67	56	75	73
New Hartford	71	82	81	68	76	80
Highland	56	60	53	52	57	47
Greenville	49	57	63	73	79	55

In grade 3, among these districts, grade 3 performance in Clinton was the highest of compared districts. In grade 4, performance was very similar to comparable districts with the exception of New Hartford and Cazenovia. These districts outperformed by 14-23%. In grade 5, the difference again is small; 8-13% difference in these two same districts. In grade 6, we see Clinton performing very well with the exception of Cazenovia, where performance is higher by 9%. In grade 7, Clinton was outperformed by 5/6 districts. Lastly, in grade 8, once again we see a slight improvement in Clinton's performance with only two districts achieving at a higher level.

### Regents Exams

ELA- Clinton performs very well in this content area. Over the three years, only New Hartford (2) and Cazenovia outperformed the district, both within ten percentage points.

Geometry – Clinton again performs very well. Only one district during these years outperformed Clinton students and that was New Hartford in one year only. This difference was less than 5%.

Algebra 2/Trig – New Hartford and Cazenovia outperformed Clinton consistently over the three years by the following percentages: New Hartford (average of 35), Cazenovia (average of 13).

Integrated Algebra – There were reporting difficulties for New Hartford during 2/3 years. Clinton's performance exceeded Cazenovia's by ranges of 10, 20 and 25 percentage points.

U.S. History – This is another area of strength for Clinton students. New Hartford and Cazenovia outperformed Clinton by 2-5%; Cazenovia by approximately 10% in 2/3 years.

Global History – Again, the pattern of New Hartford and Cazenovia reappeared. New Hartford outperformed by 5-10%; Cazenovia by 8% in 2/3 years.

Living Environment – New Hartford (5%) and Cazenovia (5-10%) outperformed Clinton in each of the reported years.

Earth Science – This content area is a performance strength. However, New Hartford exhibited reporting difficulties again in 2/3 years making a conclusion for a comparison between Clinton and New Hartford unavailable. However, during the one year reported, New Hartford outperformed Clinton by 5%.

Physics – This discipline is the first one with a more divergent representation of performance among the districts. We find Coxsackie (1/3), Kinderhook (1/3), and Cazenovia (1/2) outperforming Clinton. However,

over the three years, Clinton's performance improved significantly and in 2011-12, only one district (Coxsackie) outperformed the district by only 3%. This content area is another performance strength.

Chemistry – With New Hartford reporting all three years, we find that their performance is between 5-10% higher. Other districts during the three years are Cazenovia (2) and Kinderhook (1), and Highland during the 2010-11 school year only. These differences again were on a very small scale of 5-10%.

Overall, this district's performance, despite financial challenges, remains competitive with most of the districts in the comparison. New Hartford and Cazenovia consistently outperform Clinton students, however, this outperformance is typically by small percentages making incremental change easily within reach with use of curriculum mapping, common formative assessments, analysis of individual NYS test questions linked to these formative assessments, and sharing of best practices.

<b>Regents Exam Comparisons – Average % over three years</b>										
Grade	ELA	Geo	Algebra 2/Trig	Integ. Alg.	U.S.	Global	Living Env.	Earth Sci.	Physics	Chem.
Cazenovia			10-20%	10- 25%	5- 10%		20%			5-10%
Coxsackie									3-5%	
Kinderhook										
New Hartford	10%		15-20%		5-8%	20%	10- 15%			5-10%
Highland										
Greenville										

## **“Statistical Neighbors”: Comparative Analysis of Fiscal History**

### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this analysis was to compare Clinton Central Schools fiscally to similar school districts sharing common wealth and student enrollment in New York State. Gaps or differences will raise further questions or generate possible conclusions and actions. Data was based upon three years (2009-2012) of fiscal information from the New York State Education Department. Data shown for each school district is the average over three years of data.

Selection of similar schools was primarily based upon the wealth of the school district, with a secondary selection using enrollment. The Combined Wealth Ratio (CWR) is computed by New York State and is a measure of a school district’s property and income wealth computed per student.

The analysis of revenues included looking at unexpended surplus, state aid received, and local school tax levy. Clinton’s data was very similar to the average of the ten other statistical neighbors. There were no anomalies observed in the data.

Clinton’s percentage of administrative costs in relation to total expenses was 1.99%, slightly lower than the group average of 2.02%. Although BOCES expenses are higher than the group as a percentage of total budget, the majority of this cost is for providing special education services to classified children through BOCES.

Clinton’s use of BOCES to provide many of its special education services may skew some of the data, but there do not appear to be any issues of significance or suggestions for change. One area, Operations and Maintenance, does appear to be statistically significant and is about \$165,000 less than comparable districts.

Transportation costs were unusually low (3.2% of total budget vs. 5.2% for the other districts). This represents a difference of approximately \$471,000.

Health costs as a percentage of total budget were high for the district by approximately \$707,000 compared to the other districts.

The district carries higher than average debt service costs compared to the group, totaling \$189,000 more annually than the districts that are comparable. The district also faces a lower than average land value per student offset by a higher income per student than the group average.

### **Statistical Analysis and Comparisons**

The analysis was divided into six tables. Each table is analyzed separately and comments, questions, and any suggestions are included. Some of these comments or recommendations are included in the Strategic Plan. The tables are as follows:

Table 1: Revenue

Table 2: Administrative Expense, Selected salaries, BOCES Services

Table 3: Instructional Expenses, O & M, Teacher Retirement

Table 4: Health Insurance, Benefits, and Transportation

Table 5: Debt Service, Enrollment, Per Child Costs, Wealth Comparisons

Table 6: CWR, Total Instructional Expenses, Local Effort - Taxes

### **Analysis of Table 1: Revenue**

The analysis of revenues included looking at unexpended surplus, state aid received, and local school tax levy. Clinton's data was very similar to the average of the ten other statistical neighbors. There were no anomalies observed in the data.

#### Column 2: Surplus as % of Total Expenditures

The Clinton % surplus over the three years (2009-2012) is very similar as a percentage (5.63%) to the statistical neighbors (5.82%). There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

#### Column 6: % State Aid of Total Revenues

Although there was some range within statistical neighbors, the average of 42.2 is similar to Clinton's average of approximately 43.4% of total revenues from aggregate state aid. This is also an indication that the districts are generally similar. There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

#### Column 8: % of Local Revenue of Total Revenues

Clinton's percentage of local revenue (primarily local school tax levy) was very similar to the average of the ten other districts. There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

Table 1: Revenue

**Clinton Statistical Comparisons: Revenue (Columns 1-10)**

Statistical Neighbors (2019-12)	1. Unexpended Surplus	2. Surplus as % of Total Expenditure <sup>c</sup>	3. State Aid	4. STAR	5. Total State Aid	6. % State Aid of Total Revenue <sup>c</sup>	7. Local Revenue	8. % Local Revenue of Total Revenues	9. Federal Aid	10. Total Revenue
CAIRO-DURHAM	\$1,785,847	6.72%	\$13,001,002	\$1,236,487	\$14,237,489	53.3%	\$10,790,860	40.4%	\$1,702,760	\$26,731,110
CAZENOVIA *	984,896	3.81%	7,875,826	1,545,217	9,421,043	37.4%	14,167,828	56.3%	1,568,331	25,157,203
CLINTON	1,326,779	5.63%	8,155,717	2,256,227	10,411,944	43.4%	12,110,411	50.5%	1,440,885	23,963,240
COXSACKIE ATHENS*	2,769,945	11.04%	7,731,183	1,426,711	9,157,894	36.4%	14,341,570	57.0%	1,680,747	25,180,210
DOVER	1,457,533	5.18%	9,889,950	1,976,477	11,866,427	41.7%	15,015,170	52.7%	1,606,547	28,488,144
GENESEO	939,104	5.50%	6,025,888	1,001,317	7,027,205	41.2%	8,963,054	52.6%	1,055,676	17,045,936
GREENVILLE*	1,327,596	4.99%	10,066,522	1,644,063	11,710,585	44.2%	13,249,389	50.0%	1,518,340	26,478,314
HIGHLAND*	1,273,455	3.56%	11,126,637	2,200,357	13,326,995	37.3%	20,636,014	57.8%	1,753,122	35,716,131
KINDERHOOK *	1,841,952	5.33%	12,198,157	2,157,185	14,355,342	41.1%	18,455,977	52.9%	2,078,037	34,889,356
NEW HARTFORD *	2,298,503	4.93%	12,675,429	3,941,034	16,616,464	35.9%	27,355,126	59.1%	2,302,159	46,273,749
TUPPERLAKE	1,121,281	7.09%	7,813,611	731,173	8,544,784	53.0%	6,426,766	39.9%	1,148,454	16,120,005

Average of 10 Other Districts

5.82%

42.2%

51.9%

**Analysis of Table 2: Administrative Expense, Selected Salaries, BOCES Services**

Clinton’s percentage of administrative costs in relation to total expenses was 1.99%, slightly lower than the group average of 2.02%. Although BOCES expenses are higher than the group as a percentage of total budget, the majority of this cost difference can be explained by contracting through the BOCES for special education services to classified children with these costs representing about 16-17% of total BOCES expenditures.

Column 13 : Central Administrative Expense as % of Expenses

The Clinton % for Administrative expense of 1.99% is very similar to the average for the ten other school districts of 2.02%. There was a range between 1.50 and 2.59. Typically, a larger school districts will experience a slightly smaller percentage allocated to this expense due to its size. There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

Column 18: BOCES Expense as % of Total Expenses

Clinton experienced a significantly higher percentage (8.4%) versus the group average (6.85). This difference is caused by Clinton’s use of the BOCES special education programming versus providing the services in district as explained above. Columns 19 and 20 would support this assumption based upon the lack of tuition payments made by the Clinton district compared to the other school districts.

**Table 2: Administrative Expense, Select Salaries, BOCES**

**Statistical Comparisons: Select Expenses (Columns 11-20)**

<i>Statistical Neighbors (2019-12)</i>	<i>11. Board of Education</i>	<i>12. Central Admin.</i>	<i>13. Central Admin. as % of Total Expenditures</i>	<i>14. Teacher salaries</i>	<i>15. Instructional Salaries PPS</i>	<i>16. Instructional Salaries Curr. Devel.</i>	<i>17. BOCES Instructional</i>	<i>18. BOCES Expense as % of Total Expenses</i>	<i>19. Out of District Tuition Paid</i>	<i>20. Other Tuition</i>
CAIRO-DURHAM	\$164,055	\$582,011	2.19%	\$8,487,564	\$380,547	\$610,034	\$1,670,845	6.3%	\$150,411	\$339,628
CAZENOVIA *	129,969	552,276	2.14%	8,532,687	320,357	640,934	990,684	3.8%	5,102	37,651
CLINTON	389,615	469,890	1.99%	7,135,990	381,949	435,887	1,979,299	8.4%	1,098	0
COXSACKIE ATHENS*	134,054	505,717	2.02%	8,518,279	715,367	633,034	1,060,556	4.2%	54,748	120,344
DOVER	172,464	555,687	1.97%	9,001,514	734,735	684,570	1,879,792	6.7%	29,285	658,918
GENESEO	104,910	441,254	2.59%	5,854,799	156,002	484,035	1,182,574	6.9%	204,777	46,235
GREENVILLE*	150,267	582,770	2.19%	9,089,206	495,946	476,799	1,508,966	5.7%	34,045	632,977
HIGHLAND*	171,135	567,616	1.59%	11,038,755	735,766	713,518	3,735,052	10.5%	46,015	472,205
KINDERHOOK *	181,283	540,367	1.56%	11,719,265	400,905	600,353	2,664,763	7.7%	118,573	863,959
NEW HARTFORD *	236,479	699,659	1.50%	13,998,936	1,078,803	881,751	3,652,647	7.8%	0	437,149
TUPPERLAKE	42,339	383,089	2.42%	4,729,033	565,098	228,101	1,257,951	8.0%	1,083	60,769

Average of 10 Other Districts

2.02%

6.8%

**Analysis of Table 3: Instructional Expense, O & M, Teacher Retirement**

Clinton's use of BOCES to provide many of its special education services may skew some of the data, but there do not appear to be any issues of significance or suggestions for change. One area, Operations and Maintenance, does appear to be statistically significant and is about \$165,000 less than other districts.

Column 23: Instructional Salaries as % of Total Expenses

Clinton's percentage of total budget comprised of instructional salaries is significantly lower than the comparative neighbors group (38.4 vs. 42.1%). This is explained largely by the portion of BOCES expense discussed earlier. Instead of paying for salaries for special education services internally, the service is contracted out and not coded to instruction. There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

Column 24: Instructional Salaries as Ratio to ADM

The discrepant differences are explained above.

Column 28: O & M Expenses as % of Total Expenses

The district's percentage of O & M (Operations and Maintenance) of 5.7% is less than the comparative statistical neighbors of 6.4%. This translated into approximately \$165,000 less annually in the Clinton budget for Operations and Maintenance in order to be at the average of the other districts. Although schools face difficult budgets and limited revenues, eliminating these costs can cause significantly degradation of facilities over the long term causing actual total costs to increase.

Column 30: Teacher Retirement Expense as % of Total Expenses

The averages compared to Clinton are similar. There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

Table 3: Instructional Expenses, O & M, Teacher Retirement

Clinton Statistical Comparisons: Select Expenses (Columns 21-30)

Statistical Neighbors (2019-12)	21. Other Instructional Salaries	22. Total Instructional Salaries	23. Instructional Salaries as % of Total Expenses	24. Instructional Salaries as Ratio to ADM	25. Other Instructional Expense	26. Community Service	27. Operation & Maint.	28. O & M as % of Total Expenses	29. Teacher Retirement	30. Teacher Retirement Expenses as % of Total Expenses
CAIRO-DURHAM	\$1,484,128	\$10,962,272	41.3%	7,400	\$930,392	\$0	\$1,658,944	6.2%	\$816,849	3.1%
CAZENOVIA *	1,479,570	10,973,548	42.5%	6,651	938,390	167	1,883,753	7.3%	875,630	3.4%
CLINTON	1,086,125	9,039,951	38.4%	6,357	800,205	4,117	1,353,584	5.7%	721,205	3.1%
COXSACKIE ATHENS*	1,882,096	11,748,775	46.8%	7,499	920,319	0	1,420,568	5.7%	917,576	3.7%
DOVER	1,759,932	12,180,751	43.3%	7,654	1,049,504	0	2,168,442	7.7%	943,151	3.4%
GENESEO	871,007	7,365,843	43.2%	7,972	640,556	0	1,022,023	6.0%	560,175	3.3%
GREENVILLE*	1,405,509	11,467,459	43.1%	8,952	875,636	11,621	1,587,679	6.0%	841,866	3.2%
HIGHLAND*	1,767,650	14,255,688	39.9%	7,551	976,732	764	1,890,557	5.3%	1,111,653	3.1%
KINDERHOOK *	1,398,933	14,119,456	40.9%	7,434	925,411	0	2,443,804	7.1%	1,260,340	3.6%
NEW HARTFORD *	2,669,240	18,628,730	39.9%	7,024	1,360,382	20,625	3,186,394	6.8%	1,423,348	3.1%
TUPPERLAKE	844,704	6,366,936	40.3%	7,386	587,813	0	872,653	5.5%	481,095	3.0%

Average of 10 Other Districts

42.1% \$7,552

6.4%

3.3%

Table 4: Health Insurance, Benefits, Transportation

Clinton Statistical Comparisons: Select Expenses (Columns 31-39)

Statistical Neighbors (2019-12)	31. Health Insurance	32. Health Costs as % of Total Expenses	33. Other Employee Benefits	34. Other Benefits as % of Total Expense	35. Other Undistributed	36. Other Expense	37. Sub-Total (No Debt or Transp.)	38. Transportation	39. Transportation as % of Total Expenses
CAIRO-DURHAM	\$2,436,050	9.2%	\$1,532,069	5.8%	\$382,226	\$114,987	\$21,740,739	\$1,811,603	6.8%
CAZENOVIA *	4,102,240	15.9%	1,609,576	6.2%	390,769	45,427	22,535,181	1,125,611	4.4%
CLINTON	3,626,603	15.4%	1,416,510	6.0%	591,446	132,768	20,526,291	760,468	3.2%
COXSACKIE ATHENS*	2,794,281	11.1%	1,366,159	5.4%	586,950	502,241	22,132,289	1,405,934	5.6%
DOVER	2,564,468	9.1%	1,684,301	6.0%	450,061	247,177	24,584,002	1,907,778	6.8%
GENESEO	1,296,660	7.6%	896,023	5.2%	695,808	500,000	14,956,839	1,034,721	6.1%
GREENVILLE*	3,127,891	11.8%	1,767,454	6.6%	397,903	456,065	23,442,600	1,618,577	6.1%
HIGHLAND*	5,498,081	15.4%	2,131,386	6.0%	599,039	8,677	31,464,600	1,491,079	4.2%
KINDERHOOK *	4,829,959	14.0%	2,091,219	6.1%	533,706	139,000	30,711,840	1,853,523	5.4%
NEW HARTFORD *	6,654,309	14.3%	2,562,897	5.5%	1,394,798	26,179	40,283,596	1,600,083	3.4%
TUPPERLAKE	2,416,990	15.3%	872,024	5.5%	269,312	95,864	13,707,918	569,742	3.6%

Average of 10 Other Districts

12.4%

5.8%

5.2%

**Analysis of Table 4: Health Insurance, Benefits, Transportation**

Health costs as a percentage of total budget were high for the district by approximately \$707,000 compared to the other districts. While transportation costs were unusually low (3.3 vs. 5.2%), this was accounted for by the district being very efficient in designing bus routes, and maximizing and extending bus utilization. Even within the local 12 school BOCES, Clinton's costs per student transported have been the lowest.

Column 32: Health Costs as % of Total Expenses

The average of 12.4% among the statistical school neighbors was significantly less than Clinton at 15.4%, spending 3% more of its budget on health insurance coverage than its similar counterparts. This translates into approximately \$707,000 of additional expense annually. The school district needs to explore health insurance alternatives that reduce costs and bring total costs nearer the average.

Column 34: Other Benefits as % of Total Costs

There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

Column 35: Transportation as % of Total Expenses

Transportation costs were unusually low (3.2% of total budget vs. 5.2% for the other districts). This represents a difference of approximately \$471,000. Net state aid is in the 60-62% range.

**Analysis of Table 5: Debt Service, Enrollment, Per Child Costs, Wealth Comparisons**

The district carries higher than average debt service costs compared to the group, totaling \$189,000 more annually than the districts that are comparable. The district also faces a lower than average land value per student offset by a higher income per student than the group average.

Column 42: Total Debt Service as % of Total Expenses

Clinton experienced a higher debt ratio to total budget over the three year window of analysis (2.6% vs. 1.8% average for the group). This difference translates into approximately \$189,000 annually versus the group. This is the result of bonding costs associated with the most recent capital project. However, the district should ensure that a long term plan and spreadsheet tracks all payments and projects to ensure that future projects will be timed with the reduction of past obligations.

Column 47/48: Property Wealth and Income Wealth Per District Child

Although Clinton shares a relatively similar CWR as the compared group, it has disproportionately low property value/wealth per student (\$343,990 vs. \$498,766). Although it has the lowest property value, it is balanced by one of the higher district incomes per student. In essence, it is a *land poor, income high* district relative to the compared group. This would suggest that housing costs are affordable, generally the incomes are higher than the surrounding area, causing higher than normal tax on full value but hypothetically, the taxpayers are more able to pay the higher taxes. The New Hartford district shares a similar situation – partly due to geographic reasons.

**Table 5: Debt Service, Enrollment, Per Child Costs, Wealth Comparisons**

**Clinton Statistical Comparisons: Select Expenses (Columns 40-48)**

<i>Statistical Neighbors (2019-12)</i>	<i>40. Debt Service (Principal)</i>	<i>41. Debt Service (Interest)</i>	<i>42. Total Debt Service as % of Budget</i>	<i>43. Total Expenditures</i>	<i>44. Combined Average Daily Membership</i>	<i>45. Revenue Per Pupil</i>	<i>46. Expenses Per Pupil</i>	<i>47. Property Wealth Per Pupil</i>	<i>48. Income Per Pupil</i>
CAIRO-DURHAM	\$2,503,365	\$514,149	1.9%	\$26,569,857	1,481	\$18,045	\$17,938	\$487,802	\$89,236
CAZENOVIA *	1,633,222	554,531	2.1%	25,848,544	1,650	15,256	15,679	447,770	163,907
CLINTON	1,663,250	619,469	2.6%	23,569,478	1,422	16,861	16,594	343,990	156,685
COXSACKIE ATHENS*	1,080,000	473,246	1.9%	25,091,470	1,567	16,085	16,029	508,736	118,760
DOVER	1,332,333	318,542	1.1%	28,142,655	1,591	17,907	17,694	554,774	112,674
GENESEO	720,786	355,269	2.1%	17,067,615	924	18,453	18,482	461,756	133,321
GREENVILLE*	1,159,189	365,453	1.4%	26,585,818	1,281	20,670	20,754	503,673	113,751
HIGHLAND*	2,001,476	778,576	2.2%	35,735,731	1,888	18,927	18,945	578,570	131,998
KINDERHOOK *	1,624,988	360,872	1.0%	34,551,223	1,899	18,481	18,276	528,027	141,400
NEW HARTFORD *	3,473,609	1,284,104	2.8%	46,641,392	2,652	17,447	17,585	406,411	181,726
TUPPERLAKE	1,230,345	303,592	1.9%	15,811,597	862	18,705	18,357	510,143	95,976

Average of 10 Other Districts

1.8%
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\$498,766	\$128,275
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**Table 6:** CWR, Total Instructional Expenses, Local Effort - Taxes

**Clinton Statistical Comparisons: Select Expenses (Columns 49-55)**

Statistical Neighbors (2019-12)	49. CWR Combined Wealth Ratio	50. Instruction as % of Expense	51. Total Instructional Expense	52. % of Benefits for Instructional Program	53. Total Instructional as % of Total Expense	54. Instructional Expense as % of Total Adj.	55. Local Revenues/Property Value
CAIRO-DURHAM	0.682	52.9%	\$14,052,430	16.7%	69.6%	85.6%	\$11.17
CAZENOVIA *	0.841	50.1%	12,950,801	22.4%	72.5%	83.3%	14.37
CLINTON	0.742	50.2%	11,823,610	23.0%	73.1%	84.5%	19.26
COXSACKIE ATHENS*	0.788	55.4%	13,908,688	19.7%	75.1%	86.5%	14.43
DOVER	0.812	56.1%	15,797,949	17.3%	73.4%	85.3%	15.05
GENESEO	0.757	55.2%	9,428,894	14.1%	69.4%	81.3%	15.46
GREENVILLE*	0.741	54.6%	14,518,827	19.3%	73.9%	86.0%	15.52
HIGHLAND*	0.872	54.6%	19,496,782	21.7%	76.2%	87.0%	15.79
KINDERHOOK *	0.839	54.1%	18,682,993	22.1%	76.1%	86.5%	12.97
NEW HARTFORD *	0.869	51.6%	24,079,454	21.1%	72.7%	84.6%	19.65
TUPPERLAKE	0.701	52.4%	8,277,590	22.9%	75.3%	87.0%	10.54

Average of 10 Other Districts 0.790

73.4%

14.50

**Analysis of Table 6: CWR, Total Instructional Expenses, Local Effort – Taxes**

Clinton’s CWR is within range of the compared group (.74 vs. .79 for average). Its ratio of spending for direct instruction is equivalent to the group average.

Column 49: CWR Ratio

Clinton is near the average for the CWR of its statistical neighbors.

Column 53: Total Instructional as % of Total Expense

Clinton’s ratio of expenditures for direct instruction is similar to the compared group. There do not appear to be any issues of significance.

Column 55: Local Revenue/Property Value

This was discussed on the previous page under Columns 47/48.

## Student Enrollment Projections

### Enrollment Projections for the Clinton Central School District

Student enrollment projections were calculated for the Clinton Central Schools based upon a ten-year historical analysis of enrollment using the cohort survival coefficient model window of both five and ten years. After comparing results of enrollment projections, we typically take the more conservative projection – which in this case was the five-year cohort coefficient survival rate.

The transition between each grade level and its successor level typically sees a small decrease or out-migration of students annually in school districts. In the case of Clinton, it is the opposite at many grade levels. For many grade levels over time, the number of children enrolled at Kindergarten actually increases over time. In other words, enrollment of a particular cohort group actually increases by the time of graduation 13 years later. This can partly be attributed to the closing of St. Mary's and the presumptive fact that some parents typically enroll children at the earliest grades in other options including home schooling and then enroll children later in Clinton. Another possible explanation would be the effect of Hamilton College with staff enrolling more age mature children.

### Methodology

The projection models utilized for this analysis were a ten-year and a five-year cohort survival coefficient. The cohort survival enrollment analysis method is widely used. It uses historical enrollment data to predict future changes in enrollment. It compares the number of students enrolled in one year, with the amount of students enrolled in the succeeding year and grade level. The reliability of the prediction is increased by examining the progression – or “survival” – of the number of students over a five or ten year period of time. For each year of change, a coefficient is calculated. A 1.00 coefficient indicates that there was no change in the enrollment between a grade level in year one to the next grade level in year 2. A value less than 1.00 indicates a loss or *out-migration* of children while a value greater than 1.00 indicates an increase or *in-migration* of students.

There are circumstances under which to prefer either the ten or five year cohort survival coefficient analysis. When there has been recent volatility or fluctuation in student enrollment – with a reasonable expectation that this trend will continue – selecting the five year model provides a likely more accurate model of prediction. Conversely, the ten year model is best used when there is fairly stable student enrollment, or volatility that is not expected to continue.

In the case of Clinton, there has been a slightly more rapid decrease in student population over the past five years, so the five year coefficient was utilized.

### Limitations of Accuracy of Enrollment Prediction

There are many variables that impact on student enrollment prediction that are difficult to control in a projection model. Factors that contribute to unanticipated enrollment changes may include but not be limited to: 1) a new local private school; 2) changes in state rankings and ratings of schools; 3) economic conditions; 4) property values; 5) an event that occurred in one of the schools; 6) changes in program offerings; 7) new home development; and 8) loss of commercial businesses; etc.

The most accurate enrollment projections are those that take a shorter view – three to five years. The longer the projection over time, the less reliable the prediction. It is also recommended that school districts input new data into the projection process no later than every two years, with annual input and review being ideal. Further, one year of unusual (low or high) student enrollment – especially at kindergarten – adversely affects a long term prediction since this data will predict grades 1, 2, 3, etc. Thus, a prediction model can either suppress or exaggerate long term student enrollment merely from a single statistical occurrence that is an anomaly.

## Results

The chart below represents the enrollment history since 2003-04. Over the past 11 years (2003-2014), the student population enrolled in the Clinton Central School district decreased by 21.5%, or 351 students, from a high of 1,629 to 1,278 in the current school year. However, evidence suggests that the decline in enrollment began earlier than 2003-04. Since Kindergarten incoming classes have held relatively stable over this last 10 year period – the decline in students entering at the earliest grades began well before 2003-04.

### Clinton Central School District Enrollment - Historical

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
K	99	80	78	92	85	84	106	98	101	75	82
G1	98	100	81	85	94	90	96	109	103	100	85
G2	75	93	94	80	88	96	89	93	109	98	97
G3	98	75	94	98	84	95	102	88	98	113	98
G4	128	94	79	96	100	84	99	107	86	101	113
G5	117	136	100	86	100	108	100	95	112	84	98
G6	140	115	146	106	88	102	118	102	96	114	87
G7	135	146	123	161	110	95	110	121	102	97	118
G8	156	129	143	126	157	109	100	107	127	101	92
G9	143	155	136	148	144	158	126	105	112	123	94
G10	163	135	150	127	123	135	155	122	102	107	115
G11	146	154	131	148	148	144	133	155	119	101	102
G12	131	145	152	126	125	119	151	131	149	114	97
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,629</b>	<b>1,557</b>	<b>1,507</b>	<b>1,479</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>1,419</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>1,433</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>1,328</b>	<b>1,278</b>

The chart below indicates the projection of enrollment over the next ten years using the more conservative 5 year cohort coefficient survival method.

### Clinton Central School District Projected Enrollment - 5 Year Cohort Survival Coefficient

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
K	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91
G1	88	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97
G2	83	86	95	95	95	95	95	95	95	95
G3	95	85	88	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
G4	96	97	87	90	100	100	100	100	100	100
G5	111	99	100	89	92	102	102	102	102	102
G6	96	115	103	104	93	96	106	106	106	106
G7	85	99	118	106	107	95	98	109	109	109
G8	116	86	99	119	106	107	96	99	110	110
G9	90	119	88	102	122	109	110	99	102	113
G10	92	87	115	85	99	118	105	106	95	98
G11	113	91	85	113	83	97	115	103	104	93
G12	100	111	89	84	111	82	95	113	101	102
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,258</b>	<b>1,263</b>	<b>1,256</b>	<b>1,272</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,313</b>

### Total Enrollment - By Grade Configuration - 5 Year Cohort Model

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Grade K-5	564	555	558	560	573	583	583	583	583	583
Grade 6-8	298	300	320	328	305	298	300	314	325	325
Grade 9-12	396	408	378	384	415	405	426	421	402	406

The positive enrollment information is that the relatively stable incoming classes of Kindergarten now *suggest a stabilizing student enrollment*. The five year cohort survival projection model predicts a student population range of between 1,258 and 1,318 which is a range of only 4.5%, with the lowest population in the next ten years to actually be approximately next year, 2014-15. The high number of 1,318 would be in about the 2021-22 school year.

With a relatively stabilized student enrollment, school officials can anticipate and plan for this information when planning staffing and facility needs.

The district is recommended to continue to regularly update and re-project the enrolment especially monitoring the incoming Kindergarten classes over time.

For comparison purposes, we have also included the projection model using the ten-year coefficient.

### Clinton Central School District Projected Enrollment - 10 Year Cohort Survival Coefficient

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Full day K	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91
G1	86	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96
G2	83	85	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94
G3	100	86	88	97	97	97	97	97	97	97
G4	100	102	87	89	99	99	99	99	99	99
G5	118	104	107	92	93	103	103	103	103	103
G6	101	122	108	110	95	96	107	107	107	107
G7	91	106	128	113	115	99	101	112	112	112
G8	117	91	106	128	112	115	99	100	111	111
G9	96	122	94	110	132	117	119	102	104	116
G10	89	90	115	89	103	125	110	112	97	98
G11	117	90	91	116	90	105	127	111	114	98
G12	97	111	85	87	111	86	100	120	106	108
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>1,296</b>	<b>1,290</b>	<b>1,311</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>1,322</b>	<b>1,342</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>1,331</b>	<b>1,330</b>

### Total Enrollment - By Grade Configuration - 10 Year Cohort Model

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Grade K-5	579	564	563	559	570	580	580	580	580	580
Grade 6-8	310	319	342	351	322	310	306	319	330	330
Grade 9-12	398	413	386	401	436	432	455	447	421	420

## Long Range Financial Planning Template

### Introduction and Overview of Use

On the following page is a Long Range Financial Planning template. A software copy of the Excel program was provided to the Business Office. A school district can select expenditure and revenue categories, and conduct “what if” scenarios regarding expense changes to salaries, benefits, etc. and the resulting impact on tax rates, fund balance, and the long term impact.

This template should be kept up to date and is useful during budgeting, in advance of negotiations, and as a communication tool with the public. If used properly, it is an important aid to the Board of education in making decisions.

## Clinton Central School District

### 5 Year Long Range Financial Planning

#### WHAT IF ... EXPENDITURE ASSUMPTION TABLE

<i>EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES</i>	Actual 2012-13	Forecast 2013-14	Forecast 2014-15	Forecast 2015-16	Forecast 2016-17	Forecast 2017-18	Forecast 2018-19
Board of Education/Central.	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Business Office/Finance	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Instructional Supervision	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Instructional Salaries	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Instructional Expense	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Athletics	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Operatons & Maintenance	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Transportation	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Benefits	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Debt Service/Other	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

<i>EXPENSES</i>	Actual 2012-13	Forecast 2013-14	Forecast 2014-15	Forecast 2015-16	Forecast 2016-17	Forecast 2017-18	Forecast 2018-19
Board of Education/Central.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Business Office/Finance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Instructional Supervision	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Instructional Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Instructional Expense	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Athletics	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operatons & Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transportation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Debt Service/Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Projected Annual Budget:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<i>Annual Expenditure Change</i>		#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

#### WHAT IF ... REVENUE ASSUMPTION TABLE

<i>REVENUE CATEGORIES</i>	Actual 2012-13	Forecast 2013-14	Forecast 2014-15	Forecast 2015-16	Forecast 2016-17	Forecast 2017-18	Forecast 2018-19
State Aid-other than Building	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Bulding Aid	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Local Property Tax	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
STAR	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Interest & Misc.	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
PILOT	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	\$0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

<i>REVENUES</i>	Actual 2012-13	Forecast 2013-14	Forecast 2014-15	Forecast 2015-16	Forecast 2016-17	Forecast 2017-18	Forecast 2018-19
State Aid-other than Building	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bulding Aid	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Property Tax	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
STAR	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Interest & Misc.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
PILOT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Projected Annual Revenues:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<i>Annual Expenditure Change</i>		#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

Annual Growth	\$0	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Budget Deficit (or Surplus)	\$0	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Cumulative Deficit (or Surplus)	\$0	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Balanced Budget Estimate		#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Allowable Expenditure Growth		#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

## School and Community Survey Analysis

### Clinton Community Survey Analysis

% Community member : 55.6%

% Retiree: 44%

(four skipped answering this question)

#### Communication

The first question was dedicated to evaluating how members of the community learn about their school district. Unfortunately, half chose not to respond to this question. We provided options which included the district newsletter, neighbors, local newspaper, and the district website. Of the 17 who responded, however, we learn that the most reliable tools are the district newsletter, neighbors, and the local newspaper. Since there was such a large spread, this indicates that communication needs to continue in a broad manner while upgrading those “go to” venues that appear most frequently.

#### Academic Reputation in/outside the Community

Unfortunately, sixteen respondents skipped this question, however, the sixteen who responded provide a range of opinion. Only 41% agree that the schools have a good academic reputation. A full 31% were neutral. Finally 25% disagreed. Comments provide additional insight into the nature of these responses. Three respondents suggest that the reputation has declined since the 1980s and 1990s while two believe that the reputation has declined over the past few years. Reasons for the decline include a reduced focus on the arts, sports and extracurricular opportunities in combination with negative press. Two respondents also wondered about a “*mentor or intern program for students*” which could both build opportunities for students but also help to inform community members about aspects of program. They followed this comment with a desire to pull more community members to concerts, plays, and athletic events.

In terms of academic reputation outside the community, the responses are similar except that a full 62.6% of respondents disagree or are neutral.

Clearly, a concerted effort must be made to engage the larger community about the school district and find ways to make them a part of the school district. One respondent eloquently suggested that there needs to be “*more sharing of skills with the school...such as group forums, or speakers for students and the village...in order to “become a common group.”*” Furthermore, the academic reputation of the district may create a downward spiral as the community seeks to bring new families to the community.

The results of this question indicate a public relation challenge warranting further study.

#### Community Partnerships and Volunteerism

This was an open-ended question which resulted in only twelve responses. However, one respondent suggested that there were already a number of community partnerships “*aligned with the district to help sustain opportunities for Clinton students, however these organizations have been tapped time after time for assistance and support. It is now thought of as a common practice to go to these groups to help support for..... programs and equipment*” and they wonder about “*the responsibility of the BOE.*”

One respondent was more solution-oriented and suggested that the community *“must encourage growth for businesses to increase the tax base. This should be our number one priority.”* Similarly, another respondent inquired if *“anyone from the school sits on the Chamber or do any local boards have slots for students?”* This would serve to build a stronger sense of community but also inform community members about the school while students learn about the challenges of their community and also become more invested in it. Several respondents stated the need to utilize community volunteers to a larger degree. One shared that they were *“not invited to volunteer and they don’t see teachers in town.”* Another respondent believes that they were *“under the impression that volunteers weren’t wanted or needed because they weren’t qualified.”*

There was a suggestion about recruiting more volunteers as *“resources for middle and high school students would give them additional opportunities”* while the elementary level has extensive use of volunteers.

Combined with the direct comments on how the district communicates how volunteers can assist, nearly 77% believe that the district is not invitational enough in the manner in which it embraces community support for local schools. As stated by one respondent, *“there is a disengage for parents after graduation. If we could find a way to keep parents involved and informed, they would be strong advocates for the school system.”*

Continuing partnership with Hamilton College is vital to community members.

#### Understanding of the Values and Goals of the District

As a community member, responses were evenly split between that they agreed that they understood the values of the district with those who did not. For one of those who believes that they are not clearly communicated, they site that there are new administrators and teachers and that the time spent on developing goals is *“not carried through.”* Additionally, two comments focused on the need to prepare all students, not just those who are college-bound. With reduced electives and courses, there is a concern that not all students can adequately prepare for entry into college.

#### Clinton’s value as a community to live in and raise a family

Mirroring the student survey results and that of comments shared in interview teams, the benefits of the community reside in its *“small town appeal”* and the fact that everyone knows one another making it feel safe and caring and a *“true community”* or a *“more intimate setting to raise a family.”* The benefits of Hamilton College are repeatedly mentioned as are the other amenities such as the ice arena, library, pool, town park, etc.

This *“insularity”* is also mentioned as a potential negative since *“with its small, tight community, the students may need opportunities beyond those that we can afford to offer.”*

Finally, one respondent compares the district to New Hartford schools, which in the statistical neighbor comparison, outperforms Clinton in nearly every category, according to performance on NYS assessments 3-8 and Regents exams. This particular couple chose Clinton over New Hartford for all of the reasons listed above plus the one campus district, but now with financial pressures they feel that their district has diminished in what could have been offered to their children if they had remained in New Hartford. They repeat the need for the community to be open to expansion of residential and commercial properties.

### District Strengths

The commitment of district teachers (*"the teachers care about our students and come to know them all by name and are willing to help kids"*) appears as well as the commitment of the BOE and parents. The district, as *"the heart of the village"* has tried to maintain its program and electives and remains a *"good school system."* This was countered by one respondent who believes that the district has *"lost its strengths."* A singular challenge of a small district is mentioned again as both a benefit and a deficit since the district can no longer offer a broad array of electives and program choices. That being said, this parent still *"choose smaller than a school with a graduating class of 500. I think you would get lost in the crowd."* This sentiment as expressed by many could be a focal point the district's brand.

### Areas that the District should study

For obvious reasons, the fiscal environment was a theme. The area of facilities use and rental was raised since they are used less by community organizations. Gaining control of both existing and retired staff benefits was also mentioned. One respondent believes that *"lower property and school taxes would lure more young families to Clinton."*

Despite budgetary issues, there is significant interest in expanding AP classes and for Clinton to become a *"more innovative and creative school."* *"Teach research and hands on approaches"* and appreciate that *"people learn in many ways other than sitting in a chair."* These also responses align with student perceptions. One respondent suggested mergers in order to build program offerings. This goal could also be achieved through a distance learning lab.

As echoed in one of the interview teams, the needs of struggling students are sometimes left unmet.

Class sizes (smaller) and the condition of the middle school facility are mentioned as continued areas of interest.

Finally, one respondent stated the theme that came from interview teams and this survey in that they *"wonder what opportunities today's students are missing out on that my kids had. We can't compete with other communities that have a good business tax base."*

### Overall themes

- Communication to all stakeholders needs to be diverse and include selling the community and district "brand" of small, intimate personal attention. Be more explicit on the mission and goals of the district.
- Exploration of distance learning in order to remain competitive with course offerings for students to remain competitive to what other districts can offer.
- Forge stronger partnerships with the business community and seat district members on various community governing bodies.
- Encourage ways to build tax base.
- Continue to celebrate the benefits of living in small community.
- Consider classroom strategies that are creative and keep the district on the forefront of innovative practices.
- Encourage volunteerism in secondary schools and find ways for talents of community members to be utilized in the classrooms.

## Student Survey Analysis

6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> 25 students

9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> 29 students

% of total 6-12 students:

### Instructional Climate

Students report that they believe that Clinton teachers expect them to do their best, that they are understanding and supportive, know and care about them, and give them individual help when needed. They report less often that teachers make learning fun in the classroom.

Student learning experiences in the classroom were found to occur most often are whole class discussions and listening to the teacher (57% report that this occurs most of the time). A far *lesser* number report that they engage in small group work. Additional areas that students report occur less often ((17%-21% ) are the ability to engage in projects and use of technology.

We know that student choice increases investment and engagement in learning, however, when asked if they have opportunities to choose their own projects, 55% of students respond that they do not. The majority of students do agree that the work presented in class does make them think (83%). Student opinion on this factor may link with their thoughts about learning being “fun” in classrooms.  
I wish we could do more projects or small group work.

When asked if they are challenged by the work their teachers give them, 70% agree, however, 30% disagree. We would suggest that differentiated instruction be considered, particularly for your high ability students. Another method is the use of contracts for high ability students that allow them to go further in the curriculum.

Although a do not fully agree that I am challenged by class work on a regular basis, all of my teachers provide additional resources to challenge me. They also gladly answer any questions I have that go deeper into a topic.

Students are assessed on their learning in a variety of ways. A full 56% are predominantly assessed by writing and multiple choice, chapter and unit tests, and in-class quizzes. Students report less often formative assessments such as “ticket out the door” and projects which mirrors the data above regarding less focus on projects, choice and methods to enhance student engagement. In comments, confirmed by on-site interviews, students report that teachers frequently use Brain Honey. Nearly 80% of students believe that grading is fair and represents what they have learned. *“They make my day interesting, although I wish their course material was not solely focused on testing at the end of the year and more focused on actually engaging students in learning.”*

Student comments on the issue of grading suggest that they feel there is a range of grading practices exemplified by “a lot of my classes are graded based on test and quizzes. If you don't test well you are in trouble” and *“this really depends on the teacher. Some teachers give easy As, others have nothing negative to say but give you a B-.”*

### Bullying and School Climate

Students report that their teachers work hard to create a safe place for them to learn, with 17% saying they disagree with this statement.

Most notably, when asked if students get along well, we find very divergent responses. While 72% believe that students in the middle and high school get along well, 20% (11) disagree and 7% (4) strongly disagree.

When asked if students in my school would always report bullying of any kind if they saw it happening, 57% said they disagreed or strongly disagreed while 43% said they agreed.

Comments with regard to this question represented a wide range of opinion from *“bullying is not a big thing in Clinton”* to *“It happens all the time.”* Another student shares that h/she thinks *“..... adults are a little bit obsessed with the idea that there is a major bullying problem in our school.”* One student shares experiences as a senior, *“I think the senior class gets along really well, and there is very little fighting or gossiping. People are all very supportive of each other. I know this is not the case in many other grades, so I feel lucky.”* Given the range of comments and the fact that half of these respondents do not agree that bullying is reported plus the importance of this topic for the healthy culture of a school, it is recommended that this remain an area of focus in the future and receive continued attention. The solution may come from one student’s idea; *“I wish we did more activities with the whole grade. since we have been basically split into people taking honors classes and people who are not, i (sic) only ever see the people in my classes.”*

A couple students felt that they were confused about what bullying really was. For example, two students share that *“some people can’t always tell if people are bullying”* and *“it can be hard to tell what is bullying and what is just horsing around. Many people would rather play it safe and not say anything.”*

One student mentions the homogeneity of the school district which also appeared in one of our interview teams. Since this area of need is already understood, it is still important to remain mindful of this continued need as expressed by one student, *“I really wish that our school was more open minded to different cultures and ethnicities. Because there a lot of usage of offensive and derogatory phrases or names that could be very offensive to some. Our school is just very homogeneous and we need to include some variety.”*

However, embedded in the comment section, students celebrate and corroborate the sentiments expressed throughout our interviews; the value of the small community. Students share that they *“ like that the school is a safe environment.”* From another student; *“it’s also a small school so the students all know each other and are able to connect.”* Other typical statements include:

- *I like that when I enter the building I know I am safe.*
- *I like that teachers help you with work and build a happy environment.*
- *I like how our school is very caring & understanding :)*
- *I love that for the most part everyone knows everyone. I get the chance to really get to know my teachers and develop a comfortable relationship with them.*

The themes of appreciating “the environment” and the “small community school” completed by caring teachers is evidence throughout many of the comments and is a point of celebration.

### What students like about the school

Students repeatedly mention the positive attitude of most teachers, exemplified by this one comment that *“teachers are repeatedly mentioned as mostly caring and interested in their students and content area.”* From another student, *“I like that some of the teachers take time out of their lives to participate in things that the students enjoy.”* Furthermore, students indicate again their interest in active learning; *“Being able to hold intellectual conversations or debates with teachers inside or outside of class.”*

A continued focus on the arts with tight budgets is also appreciated by several survey respondents; *“I love how the school still focuses time on art and music”* and *“the ability to be in theater.”*

Intellectually, students note several times their appreciation of rigorous content and meaningful classroom learning experiences. One student exemplifies several respondents when they stated; *“ X challenges us by giving us quality homework that actually tests our skills and gives us challenging tests. X is great by giving us articles and essays to write so we can really practice our reading comprehension, analytical skills and our writing skills.”*

The grounds and facilities were appreciated in terms of their size and cleanliness, *“I like how we have a nice campus and how big our school grounds are.”*

### What students wished were different

School lunch was mentioned many times as an area that would warrant a conversation with student government. However, many students fully appreciate their ability to enjoy off campus lunch, *“and that we have the opportunity to have off campus lunch; it helps us relax mid-way through the day and helps the local economy.”* Students commented on an area mentioned above; the need for additional consideration of instructional strategies and active learning. Examples of comments included the following:

- *I wish we could do more projects or small group work.*
- *I think that you don't have to think to get through high school. One only has to regurgitate information. This has been true throughout my high school career and has only started to change my senior year in a select few of my AP classes.*
- *I feel that some teachers do not use their time wisely by giving us useless projects and worksheets to work on instead of actually teaching us things. we need to use our time more wisely. Some teachers really need to teach us quality information that we will need to know for the regents or AP tests.*
- *I wish the work were more challenging.*
- *They make my day interesting, although I wish their course material was not solely focused on testing at the end of the year and more focused on actually engaging students in learning.*

Finally, students lament the loss of electives and student clubs with declining revenues as exemplified by these comments,

- *I wish we had more electives as well. So many great electives are no longer being offered like International Studies, Cultural Anthropology, Botany, Sports Medicine etc.*
- *I also wish academic clubs would not be cut, like Mathletics for example. Mathletics was an amazing club and the top 6 students of the Senior Class were all involved in it, and that says something. Academics are more important than sports. I wish our school wasn't so revolved around athletics, and focused more on academics.*

## Parent Survey Analysis

Respondents: 168

K-5 91%

6-8 25%

9-12 20.8%

### Communication

Prompt return of calls: Calls returned in a timely manner. A full 74.4% of responding parents agree or strongly agree that schools are responsive to their calls.

Welcoming main offices: 93.4% of parents believe they are greeted, or acknowledged, in a timely manner.

Parent contact to provide information about academic performance:

61.4%. When this prompt was changed to reporting of academic struggles, social needs, or recognition, between 62-68% had *not* been contacted. A parent comment, *"I never receive any calls of praise or to communicate struggle. This is one of the things that good teacher pre-programs encourage-parent communication."*

The prompt, "I know what my child's teacher expects of them," 96% of parents agree or strongly agree. However, parent comments suggest that communication could be vastly improved beginning in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, but primarily in the high school. These comments do not seem to apply to ELA and math. Parents feel they have no way to find out about homework, what is being taught, and any needs their children may have other than a report card.

Parents remain informed through a variety of means.

A full 76% of parents cannot check a teacher's website for homework, assignments, or for classroom events. Parents are not using the website, or any of the other tools to any significant degree. This is problematic for communication and as a means to provide service, communicate the values of the small community which is so highly regarded as a point of attraction for families moving into the area. In other words, the nature of a small community and its individualized care is not congruent with levels of communication to families. One parent's comment suggests their perception of the situation; *"Some teachers are using them (websites) and communicating with parents and have clear expectations. The others...big mystery."* Another parent shares that a couple of teachers use websites and brain honey but otherwise, *"we are in the dark with every other class."* One statement said that parents *"never seem to know what is going on"* at the middle school. While communication was improved at the elementary level, a consistent tool such as a newsletter was echoed several times as a request.

Comments on this question, centralize around district communication as well as exemplified by this comment; *"stronger communication would demonstrate respect for the members of the CCS community."*

There is parent interest in a parent portal so parents can view their child's performance. Some parents also appear interested in a Facebook tool which is used by PTO.

### Academic Expectations and Reputation

The prompt that the school expects quality work was responded to in the affirmative by

82.2% of parents. The request for a parent portal was echoed again so parents could remain engaged with their child's performance. Responses were very mixed with parents of struggling students believing that they were not receiving the help they needed to the advanced students who were not being challenged appropriately.

The schools' reputation in the community was supported by 77.7% of parents. However, those fifteen parents responding suggest that the reputation of the district is declining. Reasons for the decline are the lack of challenge, lack of writing assignments at the secondary level, and support for students.

The school's reputation outside the community dropped to 72% support. Responses to this question are noteworthy. In addition to multiple responses that the reputation is declining ("*we believe that the school is benefitting from a longstanding reputation for good academics, but that this may not last much longer*"), reasons for this decline include the lack of electives that other districts can offer, reduced athletics with budgetary constraints, diminished academic rigor. Two parents share the "trade-offs" for these deficiencies is the "*personal feel of the schools in the district.*"

The diminished academic rigor is borne out when parents are asked if their child's learning experiences are motivating. Only 33.8% of parents feel they are quite motivating, 37.6% feel they are somewhat motivating, and 18.8% feel they are slightly motivating. Several parents worry that Common Core modules have diminished the motivational aspects of learning (although one parent said they loved it). Many parents share that motivation depends on the teacher and again we see the theme of challenging advanced learners. Another theme emerged about the need for "*enhanced creativity in delivery*" with another parent suggesting that "*Clinton needs to be a progressive school-we are not in the 1950s!*"

Parents agree (68.9%) that instructional technology can enhance learning for students, however, multiple comments suggest that parents continue to seek parent portals like other districts, currently updated teacher websites, and an increased use of Brain Honey.

In terms of preparing students for the following year, 52.6% believe the schools are preparing their children quite well or extremely well, while 32% feel their child is prepared mildly well and fairly well. The recurrent theme of insufficient writing at the secondary level repeats itself in this question. As in many other districts, parents still do not completely understand the Common Core and worry that it will not prepare students for the next grade level and beyond.

#### Extracurricular Opportunities

Parents were prompted to respond to how well activities offered at the school match their child's interests; 41% responded extremely or quite well. 50% fairly or mildly well, while 9% said not at all. This spread means this area deserves further study. Naturally parent comments centered on diminished opportunity for students-after school science, swimming club, no gifted program, indoor soccer, STEM, lack of opportunity for K-2 students, "*Mandarin, no LEO club, no music, no arts, science teams.*" Elementary parents would love to see school newspaper, a school newsletter and yearbook and world languages. Parents appreciate the science fair, band, chorus, Math Olympiad, cross-country and outdoor track, chorus, musical, intermural program offered by teachers. There were several parents who support the continued focus on the arts. It is worth noting the comment made by one parent; "*We are glad that being at a small school enables our kids to participate in sports without having to 'make the cut.'* We appreciate the opportunities offered through the music department and worry that these programs will disappear because the staff is 'stretched too thin.' It

*would be nice if there were some traditional type of 'school spirit' activities that would help the students feel excited about being a part of the school, we find a sad lack of school pride and spirit."*

Academic assistance when needed was supported by 60% of parents with 20% disagreeing. The latter parents are more than likely the ones who feel that if their child is struggling the ability of the district to provide support is decreasing. When the prompt is with regard to difficulties socially, 30% of parents responded that this did not apply, while a small minority (less than 10%) felt they disagreed.

Parents believe that students show respect for one another; 62%, while 27% were neutral. Nearly 90% of parents believe their child feels safe at school and going to and from school.

School discipline is supported by 86.5% of parents who fall in the range of fairly well to extremely well, with the majority in "quite well" when asked how well the overall approach to discipline works for their child.

#### District Strengths – Themes and Patterns (parent comments)

107 respondents (64 skipped question)

- Teachers
- Parents
- Talented students
- Level of care
- Class and district size
- Arts
- Maintain academic reputation

#### Three Opportunities for Growth – Themes and Patterns (parent comments)

96 respondents (72 skipped question)

Most frequently cited:

- Communication through technology, portal (most frequently mentioned)
- More academic rigor
- More creative classroom activities
- Common Core as a resource
- Greater interaction with Hamilton and strengthen partnerships with others
- Enhanced extracurricular at all levels (especially arts)
- Working with other districts to provide enhanced programming for students
- Focus on needs of all students, not just AP students (theme throughout survey in addition to theme that AP students are not challenged)
- Common Core as a resource/further explanation to parents

#### Three Things that Clinton should Continue Doing (parent comments)

76 respondents (92 skipped question)

Most frequently cited:

- Class sizes
- Enrichment for students (particularly the arts and sciences)

- Communication (particularly what district does really well-selling the “brand”)
- Partnerships with community
- Allowing high schools students to leave campus for lunch
- Community/School events

In summary, parents appreciate what the schools offer for students and hope these continue without further reductions.

#### Summary Recommendations

- Communication emerged as a theme throughout the survey. Parents are requesting a parent portal, use of classroom websites, and other technological solutions to communication so they can remain supportive of their child’s instruction. The bar graph at the beginning of this summary indicates that relative value of current modes of communication. A staff/parent committee to investigate enhanced communication is recommended.
- Continue to explain Common Core to parents and show student work so they have a better sense of what students are now doing that they were not asked to do before. Asking a couple teachers at this level to highlight their practices would also be useful. Consider modules as a resource.
- Parents request additional consideration of enrichment at all levels.
- They see a real need for partnerships for the current educational program to continue. Parents value the small community feel but wish it balanced against the opportunities available in other, larger districts.
- A strong number of comments indicated a need for more creative instructional strategies. These comments were not always linked with Common Core modules.
- Academic assistance for struggling students should be as much a priority as the needs of other students, which includes enrichment and extracurricular opportunities.
- Remain mindful of how to capitalize and celebrate the district strengths so that the district’s reputation is preserved, or even enhanced.

## Instructional Survey Analysis

### 42 respondents

(There were no responses from grades 7-8)

### Instructional Technology

Corroborated through interview teams, instructional technology is an enormous challenge for teachers and is very frustrating. Thirty-four percent of teacher comments for Question #3 all confirmed that reliability of technology with students is difficult. Respondents shared that it was highly restricted, the amount of technology is very small and *“PD offerings to understand what is new are hard to come by.”* One teacher elected to no longer use technology that had been *“infused in the curriculum”* because *“software was not installed, working properly, and web sites were blocked.”* Responses included response times of days, or weeks, for repair.

### Facilities

Clinton is facing challenges of building maintenance similar to many other districts given the current fiscal challenges. Despite putting work orders into QueCenter, according to some staff, follow-through is spotty and intermittent. Leaking roofs, broken windows and plumbing were referenced as areas of continuous need. That being said, there was agreement that the custodian staff are also overworked and respond to pleas to building principals, rather than QueCenter. A full 50% believe that needs are not responded to in a timely manner.

### School Climate and Culture

Celebration of accomplishments for staff and students is a hallmark of a high performing school. In Clinton, 60% of teachers and teaching assistants responded that they feel valued in this manner. Twenty one percent disagreed while 18% had no opinion. Similarly, when asked if they systematically acknowledge both their failures and accomplishments, 47% agree but 53% were not completely satisfied.

Given the nature of our economic climate and the perceived lost lustre of the district, a recommendation would be to begin a systematic recognition for those accomplishments that match the new mission statement.

Except for a small number who were neutral, staff feel that they belong, that they are cared about, and that learning is engaging for students. However, 18% of respondents do not feel they are recognized for good work and they don't necessarily feel intrinsically rewarded for a job well done.

Staff need to feel valued at their work site in order to be fully productive. A majority of respondents feel they are treated with respect and work in a similarly respectful environment. A small number report feeling neutral about their work environment, level of collaboration and commitment to continuous improvement.

Instructional staff report that students are generally very well-behaved in Clinton. Their ability to teach and students to learn is only compromised to a very small degree by bullying and cellphone use, confirming results of the student survey.

Responding to the prompt regarding a common understanding of where the district is headed, only 33% agree. When asked if this vision was shared, we find this number drops to 27%. Only 31% believe that the district now has a good public image. A recommendation would be to share the revised vision in a number of ways with all staff and use it visibly to guide decisions in the district.

### Staff Sense of Efficacy and Shared Purpose

Particularly during challenging economic periods, a community needs to pull together and feel like they have control and a sense of agency over their work. When asked if a strong team spirit exists, 55% agree that it does, however, for 49% this is not necessarily accurate. This could be attributed to the perception that members of the school community are not all pulling together.

Affirming comments from interview teams, a district-wide sense of purpose is absent for many. However, within their schools, staff report higher levels with 65% agreeing with 35% neutral or in disagreement. This is better news for those staff in each of the three schools in Clinton. Clearly, they believe that within their schools, there is a sense of purpose for everyone.

When asked if there was a positive attitude about their collective ability to accomplish substantive things, 68% agreed, while 32% were neutral or disagreed.

Most system stakeholders feel (68%) adequately involved in goal setting and planning.

In terms of efficacy with students, the following responses are noteworthy in that they show a consistent trend toward areas where one-third of responding teachers (suggesting that if extrapolated, one could conclude a need for a similar percentage of the staff) would like additional assistance:

15%	Motivating students who show low interest in school work
21%	What you can do to get students to believe they can do well in school
15%	How much you can do to help your students value learning
<b>36%</b>	<b><i>The extent that you can craft good questions for your students</i></b>
<b>34%</b>	<b><i>The use of a variety of assessment strategies</i></b>
<b>46%</b>	<b><i>The extent that you can provide an alternative explanation when students are confused</i></b>
<b>36%</b>	<b><i>Implementing alternative strategies</i></b>
<b>33%</b>	<b><i>Improve the understanding of a failing student</i></b>
<b>30%</b>	<b><i>Provide appropriate challenges for very capable students</i></b>

This data suggests that professional development could focus on the italicized areas above.

Finally, teachers feel very confident that they know how effectively their current practices work and that they continuously seek to understand how new methods impact student performance with only 25% believing that this could improve. However, when asked about how effective their entire school is doing, 55% are uncertain, suggesting that a larger focus on overall performance is important at faculty and department meetings. Creation of a “data dashboard” that would measure those critical areas of district performance would be useful.

### Professional Learning and Inquiry Practices

A learning organization is characterized by continuous opportunities for growth for staff and students. These include discussions with colleagues, action research, use and sharing of journal articles on pertinent topics, and book study groups, for example. These practices keep an organization invigorated, always working at peak levels of ingenuity and innovation, and provide a means to share with one another.

When asked if staff systematically have discussion with one another about current research and best practices, 50% were either neutral or disagreed. When asked if they regularly share ideas, 80% responded in the affirmative. However, when asked if they have ample opportunity to learn from one another, to reflect, and dialogue to work collaboratively to enhance practice, nearly 80% only responded “to some degree.”

It is evident that understanding has already been built surrounding the Professional Learning Community model noted on agendas for conference days. Only 26% of respondents feel that they have this process well underway when prompted if they used a learning cycle that included reflection, dialogue, and action. But, 41% of teachers believe that they make time for this kind of collaborative learning to occur and 66% of respondents believe they have the use of student performance data well in hand and are working as teams to review this information to improve instruction. While these percentages appear positive and connote real progress, it must be remembered that the remainder of the respondents (30-40%) still need support in this critical area of the Regents Reform Agenda.

Since the PLC model is characterized by the use of collaborative teams that study student work for all students, their own teaching as made visible through evidence of student learning, and review of ways to reach struggling learners in a systemic and systematic manner. Only 21% of respondents disagreed that teachers collaborate with one another in order to make learning consistent for all students.

#### Instructional – Curricular Coherence

Mike Schmoker considers a fully aligned and consistently delivered curriculum as critical to whole school success. At 73%, staff believe that the essential content is organized and sequenced and that all students have an ample time to learn it. Comments suggest that for math, content is well-articulated and that the full implementation of CC modules will ensure alignment. That being said, the transition to CCSS and use of modules did create “gaps” in skills for students.

Teachers remain somewhat skeptical of the influence of CC modules on their instruction.

There was a difference in opinion if teachers were identifying essential content as a team. Despite the use of curriculum maps, teachers do not feel like they have the time to search through the maps of others to ascertain what has been covered. 66% of teachers agreed that this statement was true, while the remainder did not fully agree.

Teachers report high levels of sharing of CCSS resources (94%) and the venue for this sharing were cross grade level meetings at 73.6% and grade level meetings at 62%. Formal district provided professional development on CCSS was supported by 64.7% of respondents. Once again, at first glance these numbers appear solid, but left behind are approximately one-third of staff. Absent were school-wide meetings about new standards and wide-use of demonstration lessons or district “lab” classrooms whereby teachers could stop in and visit one another.

#### Instruction – Use of Assessments for Learning

Responses were fairly evenly split with regard to the use of assessments to inform curriculum maps with 56% of teachers responding in the affirmative and 44% only use the mapping process sometimes.

### Instructional- Use of Classroom Strategies

Research has isolated multiple indicators for quality learning environments. Staff are very much in agreement with regard to differentiated instructional strategies, use of instructional technology, building rapport with students, addressing multiple learning styles, and parent involvement.

Less frequent agreement is found with use of essential questions for clarity of lesson learning goals for students, student self-assessment of their own learning, cooperative grouping to enhance discussion of learning, student choice (noted on student survey), use of projects (noted on student survey), and vertical/horizontal articulation for alignment of content and instruction. These powerful strategies should be given strong consideration to enhance the learning environment for students and increase their engagement in learning.

### Instructional Supervision

Feedback also focused on the level of support provided by building leadership to teachers regarding CCSS and support with regard to the new Danielson framework. According to the teaching staff, building leadership are providing various levels of support for elements leading to successful implementation of the CCSS and the new APPR evaluation instrument. Between 75-85% of respondents believe that building leadership monitors the effectiveness of the instructional programming through formal and informal classroom visits, a focused review of student performance, individual conversations, and group conversations. This percentage drops to 70% when the prompt is an informed understanding of the curriculum (still a very high number). However, 62% believe that both school-wide and individual student performance could be used more purposefully to plan for future instructional decisions.

Feedback using CCSS by school leaders is very prevalent, with 73.6% of teachers reporting substantial feedback during observations.

### Summary

Based on the large volume of information gleaned from this survey of instructional staff, the following recommendations would be those rise to the top in terms of system leverage and immediate need:

- Staff are asking to be included in reduction conversations and multiple respondents feel that reductions are disproportionately hitting struggling and average students while preserving program for higher ability students.
- Instructional technology appears frequently throughout interviews and surveys as a needed area of focus. Reliability, access, repair are all areas to study.
- Consistently applied processes for building maintenance appears in multiple areas of this study.
- An intentional and genuine recognition of any staff who extends themselves beyond the expected and in a manner that matches the new district mission statement, would be appreciated by many.
- Staff need to understand where the district is headed, particularly when multiple years of reductions have been experienced by everyone. A mission statement, including staff in deliberations where appropriate, and a multi-year action plan as a result of this study, are critical. Similarly, this could build the strong team spirit that is needed to do the heavy lifting over the next few years.
- Professional development continue to focus on the CCSS as well as those areas noted in italics above, particularly institutionalization of the PLC model, use of data to improve instruction and learning, use

of a variety of assessments, questioning strategies, strategies to increase student engagement such as cooperative learning and use of projects.

- Creation of a “data dashboard” so that all staff know where they are against the district action plan and overall student performance.
- Continued provision of time for teachers to meet in teams to review module resources.
- Continued alignment of curriculum vertically and within courses.